

Proposed Market Research, Market Testing and Development Approach

GREMM UK – Sutton Coldfield / Birmingham

September 2026

Introduction / Proposed Approach

Collecting and analyzing available secondary data is a natural starting point. The UK has an unusually rich set of public and commercial sources that can help us understand the market before we touch primary research – and before anyone spends serious money on a concept that still needs to prove itself.

I'd begin with what already exists and is free or low-cost: ONS and Census data, local authority research, the Royal Sutton Coldfield and Birmingham neighbourhood profiles, VisitBritain, Sport England, transport and mobility datasets, consumer spending surveys, competitor websites and reviews, Companies House filings, Google search trends, the British Sauna Society, and a range of industry reports on spa, wellness and leisure.

If we want more depth later, we can purchase commercial datasets like CACI Acorn, CACI Retail Footprint, Experian Mosaic, or mobile location data – but I'd rather not spend on them until we know what gaps actually matter. I'm also a member of the International Council of Shopping Centers (ICSC) and can request relevant market data through that channel, though they typically charge for it and may provide a broader geographic scope than the Sutton Coldfield location requires.

Secondary data alone, however, won't answer the most important questions. It can tell us who lives nearby, how they spend, and what leisure options already exist – but it cannot tell us how real people actually react to the project specifically: whether they would come, how far they would travel, what they would pay, or how often they would return. For that, we need primary research.

I'd run that through CloudResearch, which has a professional UK respondent pool and strong tools for both qualitative and quantitative work. I currently have approximately £5,000 remaining in my CloudResearch account.

It's also necessary to spend 2–3 days on the ground in Sutton Coldfield: observing traffic, exploring neighbourhood communities and businesses, meeting with tenants and visitors, and developing a deeper understanding of the site. I can come to the UK for a few days and do this myself, or guide your local representatives through the process.

And beyond traditional research, there is something far more powerful available: testing the market through a real event at the property. Instead of relying on data and self-reported attitudes and intentions, we create a genuine reason for people to come – and then observe what actually happens: how our marketing practices perform, how people react, how local partners activate, and all the things you simply cannot learn from a conventional research report. I'd organize this in the form of a Family

Wellness Expo right in the shopping centre, and we'd come away with real insights about local residents, their wellness preferences and demand, sociodemographics, expectations, and much more.

For me, the most interesting and valuable part of this work is not producing another marketing research report. It's using research as the foundation for developing the market-entry strategy, building local demand, organizing the testing event, establishing partnerships, involving the community, testing marketing practices, and reducing investment uncertainty before the permanent project opens. I'd also want to explore whether there is an opportunity to incorporate one of our family entertainment concepts into the broader project.

Briefly About Me

I bring more than 20 years of leadership experience across business, government, research, innovation and global organizations.

- I hold a Ph.D. in Hospitality Management from a top-ranked U.S. programme, along with master's degrees in international economics, strategic management, data analytics, and MBA. I have led more than a hundred research projects in consumer behavior, hospitality, tourism, healthcare and public services, with numerous publications, presentations, citations, and awards
- I previously served as Director of a government Business Development Administration overseeing approximately 190,000 organizations, and have held CEO and senior management positions across multiple industries, managing large teams and budgets, and securing more than \$50 million in funding.
- I have developed and led innovation infrastructure supporting more than 1,000 startup and innovation projects, including incubators, accelerators, innovation hubs, funding programmes, commercialization programmes, roadshows and strategic events.
- I have organized more than 300 forums, trade shows, conventions, conferences, investment forums and other large-scale gatherings.
- A substantial part of my experience is in stakeholder engagement and events. I have collaborated with government authorities, businesses, universities, NGOs, communities, international organizations, investors, researchers and industry associations across multiple countries.
- I am currently working on developing a new generation of family entertainment concepts in the United States, including collaboration with shopping centers, research organizations, government bodies, communities, investors, and families.
- In the normal life I like boats, aircrafts, mountains, and active life related to sailing, piloting, skiing, snowboarding, swimming, cycling, running, hiking, etc. preferably with my children.

My website: <https://www.godovykh.com/>

Selected books: <https://www.godovykh.com/category/books/>

My FEC research: <https://research.futureexperiencepark.com/>

Secondary Data Research

A considerable amount of relevant information already exists and can be acquired at free or low cost. Here are the key sources and what they'll give us.

ONS Census and demographic datasets

Population by age, household structure, families with children, the 45+ and 65+ segments, employment, education, car ownership, housing type and income estimates. Critically, I'll build 15 / 30 / 45 / 60-minute catchment areas from the actual shopping centre location – not generic Birmingham statistics. Royal Sutton Coldfield is a distinct local market within Birmingham, and relying on Birmingham-wide averages would obscure important differences. One thing already worth noting: the government's own neighbourhood data profile shows a median age of 45 in Sutton Coldfield – meaning the 45+ segment that the brief highlights as a priority is, quite literally, the dominant demographic in the primary catchment. <https://www.ons.gov.uk/census>

Royal Sutton Coldfield local data

The government published a detailed neighbourhood data profile for Sutton Coldfield as part of the Plan for Neighbourhoods programme. A few findings already stand out: a footfall index of 127.1 against an England benchmark of 100 (the area generates 27% more footfall than comparable towns), and only 1.9 leisure and hospitality outlets per 1,000 residents versus 2.5 nationally. The town also ran an extensive community survey in 2025 in which residents rated Sutton Coldfield highly as a place to live, but considerably less so as a place to visit. These numbers suggest the opportunity isn't about finding customers – it's about giving them a reason to come. [MHCLG/ONS neighbourhood data profile for Royal Sutton Coldfield, July 2025.](#))

ONS Family Spending Survey (FYE 2025)

UK average household expenditure sits at £676.60 per week. Two categories that matter directly for this project are growing in real terms: recreation and culture up 9%, restaurants and hotels up 6%. [ONS, April 2024](#)

VisitBritain / Great Britain Tourism Survey

Birmingham attracted approximately 25.5 million domestic tourism day visits in 2025 – the third-largest English town destination after London and Manchester. Average day-trip spend: £53. That is a very large pool of people already travelling into the wider area for leisure. [VisitBritain regional and sub-regional data, 2025](#)

Sport England Active Lives Adult Survey (Nov 2024 – Nov 2025)

Around 4.4 million adults swim regularly in England; gym and fitness participation has grown to 15.3 million. The base of people already in the water and already paying for fitness is substantial. [Sport England, published April 2026](#)

British Sauna Society

As of mid-2026, 844 publicly accessible saunas are mapped across the UK – up from around 540 at the start of 2026. That is rapid growth. The Society is also running its own 2026 consumer study on sauna habits, motivations, access and barriers. Importantly for this project, this research is also exploring which framing of the experience resonates most with British consumers – wellness, relaxation, social bathing, or something else – and whether terminology like “Russian steam bath” helps or hinders. That is directly relevant to the positioning question in the brief. [British Sauna Society UK Sauna Map and 2026 Bather Survey](#)

UK spa and wellness market

The UK spa market was estimated at approximately \$4.6 billion in 2025, projected to reach \$13.7 billion by 2034 at a CAGR of around 12.9%, with over 3,794 businesses operating in the sector. The category is expanding fast; the question is whether our specific format can win a share of that growth in this catchment. [GM Insights](#) / [IBISWorld](#)

Therme Manchester – a strategic benchmark

A £500 million urban wellbeing resort at TraffordCity, opening late 2028, projecting 1.7 million visitors in its first year and up to 3 million annually. It describes itself as the UK’s first urban wellbeing resort combining pools, waterslides, saunas and botanical environments. It is a very different scale from our project, but it is the closest large-format reference point in the UK pipeline, and it will shape consumer expectations – and possibly competitive dynamics – across the North and Midlands. Worth watching closely both as a benchmark and as a potential competitor for the same wellness-oriented consumer. [BBC](#) / [Manchester Wire](#)

Competitor review mining

I can build a working database covering destination spas, hotel spas, thermal concepts, swimming centres, premium fitness clubs, waterparks, country resorts, leisure centres, restaurants and pubs. For each: price point, location, facilities, ratings, reviews, complaints, visit occasions, and what people are genuinely willing to pay. Review mining is especially useful for surfacing what consumers love and what falls short – in the language people use when they are not being surveyed.

One important question here relates to home and private garden as a competing leisure alternative – particularly relevant in Sutton Coldfield, where the housing stock is predominantly semi-detached and detached with gardens. The brief rightly flags this as a risk: residents who already have a comfortable outdoor space at home may have lower demand for a dedicated social leisure venue. This is something primary research will need to probe directly.

Additional sources

[Companies House](#) filings for competitor businesses, [Google Trends](#) and search volume data, local transport and bus network data, and property data for the Sutton Coldfield catchment.

What these data will help us address

Taken together, these sources will allow us to work through most of the questions in the original research brief: the size and profile of the potential audience (including the 45+ segment), household

spending on leisure, restaurant and wellness habits, the food provision gap in Sutton Coldfield, transport accessibility, the competitive landscape, sauna and spa culture, and the overall characteristics of the Sutton Coldfield/Birmingham catchment. What secondary data cannot tell us is how people will respond to the project specifically – that requires primary research and, ultimately, a real market test.

I will take me approximately two weeks to collect, organize and produce the initial market and catchment analysis.

Primary Consumer Research

Secondary data tells us who lives nearby and how they spend. It cannot tell us whether those people will actually choose this project.

I'll use [CloudResearch](#) for UK respondent recruitment. Its Connect platform can target UK participants by demographics; Prime Panels offers more precise segmentation where needed. As noted, I have roughly £5,000 available in my CloudResearch account, which should cover a substantial programme.

Phase 1 – Exploratory interviews (approximately 30–50 participants)

Open-ended conversations about current leisure and wellness habits, spa/pool/sauna usage, socializing patterns, family leisure, restaurant and pub behaviour, willingness to travel, reactions to the concept, terminology, pricing perceptions, and potential barriers – including the ‘competing with the back garden’ question that the brief raises.

I'll use an AI-led qualitative interview tool that lets respondents speak in their own words while the interview dynamically follows the most relevant themes. This is much richer than a fixed-category survey – people tell you things you wouldn't have thought to ask. Here's an example of the similar interview I did last week for the US family entertainment market:

<https://research.futureexperiencepark.com/#family-interview>

Phase 2 – Quantitative concept and pricing study

Rather than asking ‘would you visit?’ – which produces unreliable stated-interest numbers – we experimentally test the key variables:

- Admission price: £29 / £39 / £49 / £59
- Travel distance: 15 / 30 / 45 minutes
- Positioning: “Thermal Resort” / “Wellness Resort” / “Day Resort”
- Adult-focused vs. family-friendly
- Pools + sauna vs. pools + sauna + food
- Membership vs. individual admission
- Quiet relaxation vs. social experience

This produces real estimates of price sensitivity, travel elasticity, concept attractiveness and likely visit frequency – which we then combine with the catchment data to estimate realistic daily and annual

visitation. That is how we pressure-test the approximately 1,000 visitors per day figure in the brief, rather than treating it as a given.

We'll also specifically test the travel barrier question: whether Birmingham residents have a psychological resistance to travelling to Sutton Coldfield for leisure, and whether framing (the destination, not the suburb) can reduce it. And we'll probe the food hall separately – testing whether it functions as an independent reason to visit or primarily as an add-on to the thermal experience. Sutton Coldfield's relatively thin leisure offer (1.9 outlets per 1,000 residents vs. 2.5 nationally) suggests there may be genuine demand for a quality food destination that has nothing to do with pools.

On-Site Research

Online research is good. Standing in the car park at 6pm on a Friday tells you something different.

Spending 2-3 days on the ground in Sutton Coldfield is essential. I can come to the UK for a few days and do it personally, or prepare a clear methodology and guide your local representatives through the process – whichever is more practical.

What I'll be looking at:

- Traffic and footfall patterns at different times of day and on weekends
- Entrances, parking, pedestrian flows
- Informal conversations with shopping centre visitors and tenants
- Visits to competing leisure destinations, restaurants and pubs
- Exploration of nearby residential neighbourhoods
- Evening and weekend activity patterns

A key objective is identifying the most influential nodes in local communication networks – community organizations, neighbourhood groups, local government representatives, schools, sports clubs, senior groups, nonprofits, business associations, local media and individuals who are particularly effective at mobilizing people. These organizations may ultimately matter more for the launch than any paid advertising campaign.

Testing the Market Through an Event

Based on my experience working with shopping centres, I've developed what I consider the most effective mechanism for testing a new project before committing serious capital: a temporary event at the property. Instead of asking people what they might do, we create a genuine reason to come and observe what actually happens.

A well-designed event can simultaneously test:

- How much additional traffic we can independently generate
- Where visitors come from (postcode tracking)
- Which marketing channels actually drive attendance

- Cost and effectiveness of different promotional approaches
- Visitor demographics and party composition
- Dwell time and activity patterns
- Reactions to concept presentations and pricing
- Interest in memberships and early registrations
- Willingness to travel
- Partnership and sponsorship opportunities
- Working relationship with shopping centre management
- Relationships with local government and community organizations
- Media engagement
- Operational capabilities of the venue

The event becomes a live market laboratory – a way to compress months of hypothetical discussion into a short, observable real-world experiment.

As an example, I'm organizing the NY Family Expo on December 12–13, 2026 at [Destiny USA](#), New York State's largest shopping center, before developing the largest family entertainment park. This event will show us: how much family traffic can we independently generate, which marketing practices work in this geographic market, which organizations mobilize real audiences, how effectively can we establish relationships with government and community stakeholders – and what do families in this region actually want? <https://nyfamilyexpo.com/>

We could organize a Family Recreation, Entertainment & Wellness Expo or Festival right in the shopping centre in Sutton Coldfield, incorporating wellness activities, active recreation, food, community programming and a dedicated concept-testing zone.

Every marketing channel would have its own tracking. Visitors would be asked for their postcode, how they heard about the event, who they came with, and whether they would return. We'd show several versions of the concept, test positioning and prices, collect early interest registrations, and measure which parts of the experience generate the strongest response.

The event simultaneously produces research data, behavioural evidence, market awareness, community relationships, partnership development and a future customer database. It's also the fastest way to establish relationships with local communities, government authorities, businesses and other stakeholders – by inviting them to participate, present, serve on panels or join an advisory board.

If run intensively, with full support from the shopping centre and access to local lead-generation tools, three months is a realistic preparation timeline, while the event costs could be covered through sponsorships, exhibitor fees and in-kind contributions.

Community Co-Creation

This is where it gets interesting. What I find valuable – especially in an established, relatively conservative community like Sutton Coldfield – is involving local people in actually developing the concept.

Instead of communicating: “The shopping centre is bringing a new aquathermal complex to Sutton Coldfield”, we can reach a point where local residents say: “This is what we asked for, and the shopping centre responded.”

Residents can participate in interviews, workshops, polls, testing events and concept-development sessions. They can help choose amenities, food options, relaxation areas, programming and terminology. The original brief specifically raises the question of whether “Russian steam bath” language works with British consumers – residents can help answer that far more reliably than any desk research. They can also suggest activities and help define how the project should fit into their community.

Psychologically, this connects to the IKEA effect: people tend to place greater value on something in whose creation they participated.

For this project, this becomes simultaneously a research method and a marketing strategy. It can reduce resistance, generate word-of-mouth, create local ambassadors, and begin building a future customer base long before opening day.

Behavioral Insights and Field Experiments

I like to apply experimental approaches – because people's reported preferences and their actual behaviour often diverge significantly.

This is particularly appropriate in the UK, where the [Behavioural Insights Team](#) was established as the world's first institution dedicated to applying behavioral science to practical policy and business problems. Behavioral experimentation is well understood and well regarded here – both in public policy and in business.

Instead of only asking what people prefer, we can experimentally test what actually changes behavior:

Marketing

Different messages, wellness vs. recreation positioning, health vs. social benefits, family vs. adult communication, social proof, different images, community-sourced messages, different calls to action.

Traffic

Signage, wayfinding, entrance visibility, placement of promotional materials, parking communication, routes through the shopping centre.

Pricing

Admission framing, family bundles, memberships, off-peak incentives, food-inclusive packages, anchoring, monthly vs. annual membership presentation.

Zoning and experience design

First impressions, sequence of experiences, quiet vs. social zones, food placement, signage, visible activity, choice architecture.

The testing event provides the natural environment for many of these experiments – different visitors can be exposed to different messages, layouts or offers, allowing us to compare actual behavioral responses rather than stated intentions.

Expected timeline for a focused behavioral-insights programme: approximately one week for design, two weeks for field experiments, and a couple of days for analysis and recommendations.

Suggested Sequence

A practical order of work, designed so each stage feeds the next:

Stage 1 – Secondary Market Research (~2 weeks) ONS, VisitBritain, Sport England, British Sauna Society, competitor review mining, catchment analysis, etc.

Stage 2 – Online Primary Research CloudResearch qualitative interviews, then quantitative concept / price / travel testing.

Stage 3 – On-Site Research (~2–3 days in Sutton Coldfield) Property observation, tenant and visitor conversations, competitor visits, stakeholder mapping.

Stage 4 – Community and Partnership Development Identify and engage local authorities, community groups, organizations, media, nonprofits and potential sponsors.

Stage 5 – Testing Event (~3 months preparation) Family Recreation, Entertainment & Wellness Expo/Festival at the shopping centre.

Stage 6 – Behavioral Experiments Test marketing messages, pricing presentation, signage, traffic patterns and experience zoning.

Stage 7 – Integrated Market and Marketing Strategy Combine all evidence into recommendations on positioning, concept design, pricing, target audiences, partnerships, marketing, launch strategy and realistic demand projections.

Fees and Organization

To avoid complex fee negotiations, my rate is \$200 per hour of actual work when I am available + travel expenses if necessary to travel. I can personally handle research design, secondary data analysis, qualitative research, quantitative research, data analysis, field research, behavioral experiments and strategic work. The only stage that requires additional people is organizing the testing event.

Potential US Opportunities

I'd also be happy to discuss similar projects in the United States, where we are in contact with the major shopping mall groups + with underperforming and distressed shopping centres where acquisition costs can be very low relative to replacement cost. These might create interesting opportunities combining

shopping-centre redevelopment, destination experiences, family entertainment, wellness, and community programming.