# New Look prepares to close multiple stores amid challenging market conditions



A significant shift is occurring within the UK retail landscape as New Look, a high-street clothing retailer, prepares to close multiple stores in the coming days, responding to challenging market conditions exacerbated by recent tax changes. This announcement follows the earlier closure of the brand's outlet in Porth, Rhondda Cynon Taf in February, which foreshadowed broader cuts across the UK.

The closures include locations in St Austell, Cornwall, and Gateshead in Tyne and Wear, with St Austell's store set to shut down today, March 4. This decision comes amid public concern, with local patrons expressing their discontent. One area resident remarked, “There will be nothing left in St Austell, such a shame!” highlighting the emotional toll of losing retail options in the town.

New Look, which currently operates 364 stores, is contemplating shutting down approximately 100 outlets nationwide, representing nearly one-quarter of its total. Such a move could significantly impact the retailer’s workforce of 8,000 employees, reflecting a dramatic shift from its peak in 2018 when it operated around 600 stores across the UK.

In an effort to retain customers during this transition, many affected stores are promoting clearance sales with steep discounts. Social media platforms are abuzz with advertising for bargain deals, showcasing items such as swimwear priced at £1, tops at £3, dresses at £5, and boots at £12. A social media user highlighted the range of discounts available, encouraging others to capitalise on the sales.

Recent months have seen several other store closures, including the Loughborough location at the Carillon Court Shopping Centre, which closed on January 21, and stores in Wickford, Essex, and Bracknell's Peel Centre, which ceased trading shortly after on January 24 and January 30, respectively.

The driving force behind the accelerated store closures is largely attributed to an impending increase in National Insurance contributions for employers, a measure introduced by Chancellor Rachel Reeves last October. The British Retail Consortium has projected this policy could impose an additional financial burden of £2.3 billion on the retail sector, further straining an already struggling industry.

In response to the ongoing challenges, a New Look representative has previously remarked, “Our store estate is an important part of our business, alongside our best-in-class website and app.” They acknowledged the continuous investment in retail operations, noting a recent commitment of over £3 million to enhance stores in Greater Manchester and trial new initiatives aimed at improving customer experiences.

The spokesperson also pointed towards the growth of New Look's online sales, indicating that it has surpassed previous years’ performance. “We have to close stores, either due to the landlord's request or because the site becomes unviable,” they stated, but reassured, “We always remain on the lookout for appropriate new opportunities across the country.”

The situation at New Look is reflective of a broader trend affecting several major retail brands in the UK. The Sunday Times has recently reported that WHSmith is on the verge of disappearing from high streets after 230 years of operation, while Boots UK has confirmed the closure of 253 stores in a bid to implement a cost-saving strategy. The state of the retail industry remains precarious as brands navigate evolving consumer behaviour and economic pressures.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.timeout.com/uk/news/full-list-new-look-stores-closing-2025-022625> - This URL supports the claim that New Look is closing multiple stores in the UK, including locations in St Austell, Cornwall, and Gateshead, due to factors like landlord requests or unviability.
* <https://www.worldfootwear.com/news/new-look-to-accelerate-store-closures-ahead-of-tax-changes/10357.html> - This URL corroborates the information about New Look accelerating store closures ahead of tax changes in the UK, which could affect up to a quarter of its stores.
* <https://www.netmums.com/life/new-look-to-close-26-stores-for-good-in-2025-heres-the-full-list-of-locations> - This URL provides details on New Look's closure of all its stores in Ireland and mentions recent UK store closures, aligning with the broader trend of store closures.
* <https://www.timeout.com/uk/news/full-list-new-look-stores-closing-2025-022625> - This URL also mentions the closure of New Look stores in Loughborough and other locations, reflecting the ongoing challenges faced by the retailer.
* <https://www.worldfootwear.com/news/new-look-to-accelerate-store-closures-ahead-of-tax-changes/10357.html> - This URL further explains the impact of tax changes on New Look's decision to accelerate store closures, highlighting the financial pressures on the retail sector.