# UK high streets continue to suffer as thousands of stores face closure



The landscape of the UK’s high streets continues to face significant challenges as numerous well-known retailers disappear, spotlighting concerns over what is often described as the "death of our high street." A combination of factors, including soaring rents, the ongoing cost of living crisis, and the lasting impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic, have created unprecedented difficulties for businesses across the country.

Consumer behaviour has also shifted markedly in recent years, with many shoppers opting to purchase goods online and have them delivered directly to their homes. This change has undoubtedly contributed to a decline in footfall in town and city centres, exacerbating the struggles of physical retail establishments.

The situation has been quantified in a recent report by the Centre for Retail Research, published in January, which revealed that more than 13,000 high street stores closed their doors over the last year alone. The forecast appears even more concerning, with the Centre predicting that by 2025, the number of store closures across the UK could surge to approximately 17,350. Of particular note is the expected impact on independent retailers, with over 14,500 set to be affected by these closures.

This ongoing trend has led to the loss of numerous cherished retail institutions, emblematic of the changing face of high streets. Many familiar brands that have long been staples of local communities have now permanently shut their shutters, leaving memories but no physical presence in the retail landscape.

The report and the observed changes present a clear indication of the evolving challenges faced by high street retail in the UK, highlighting shifts in both economic conditions and consumer habits driving substantial transformation in traditional shopping environments.

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

## References

* <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/british-data-pwc-scotland-england-b2718355.html> - Corroborates the trend of high street closures, noting 12,804 retail/store closures in 2024 and the net reduction of 3,802 stores.
* <https://theindustry.beauty/more-than-13000-high-street-shops-closed-in-2024/> - Supports the claim of over 13,000 closures, specifically citing 13,479 stores shut (37 daily), including 11,341 independent retailers.
* <https://www.pwc.co.uk/industries/retail-consumer/insights/store-openings-and-closures.html> - Highlights reduced net closures in 2024 compared to 2023, with 10 net closures daily, reflecting continued pressure on high streets.
* <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1356731/retail-store-closures-uk/> - Provides historical context for UK retail closures, showing trends from 2018-2024, though specific figures vary by methodology.
* <https://www.statista.com/topics/4655/high-street-retail-in-the-united-kingdom-uk/> - Contextualizes the broader challenges facing UK high streets, including record closures in 2023 and post-pandemic impacts.