# Kingsway Centre reinvents itself as a multi-use community hub amid retail decline



The Kingsway Centre in Newport is experiencing a remarkable transformation under the stewardship of The Boyce Group, led by Niall Leighton-Boyce, despite challenges facing traditional retail sectors. The closure of one of its stores is part of a wider restructuring affecting 32 shops, yet the centre’s management remains optimistic about its new business model, which has helped the Kingsway Centre achieve near full occupancy—an increasingly rare feat among UK shopping centres.

The Boyce Group’s approach centers on innovation and diversification beyond conventional retail. Since acquiring the centre, the group has introduced several leisure and experiential offerings, notably The Underground, an indoor venue featuring airsoft, axe throwing, and a rage room. This unique combination of activities has attracted a wider and younger demographic, encouraging longer visits and boosting secondary spending. The Underground provides various game modes to accommodate all skill levels, fostering a welcoming environment for enthusiasts and groups, while also offering family-friendly events like Nerf wars and birthday bookings.

This pivot towards experiential leisure aligns with a broader reimagining of retail spaces as community hubs. The Kingsway Centre has also opened its doors to new businesses; over 11 have joined within the first six months under the new ownership, including food and craft outlets as well as retailers like Delicious Delights and Warren James. The launch of Little Kingdom Adventure has further enhanced the centre’s appeal to families, driving foot traffic and supporting neighbouring shops.

Additionally, the Boyce Group has secured planning permission to incorporate educational uses within the centre, envisaging partnerships with academic institutions and potential university-led expansions. This strategic move promises to sustain year-round footfall, foster local skills development, and stimulate the regional economy. Such initiatives hint at a future where the centre extends beyond shopping to become an integrated space for learning and community engagement.

Their plans also include converting Sovereign House into student accommodation and transforming Emlyn House into a public square, enhancing the centre’s role as a social and cultural destination. The introduction of new food outlets and vending options is intended to increase dwell time and cement Kingsway’s status as a family-friendly environment.

The Boyce Group’s evolving vision for Kingsway exemplifies a growing trend among developers to reinvent retail environments as multi-use hubs. Moving away from the traditional high street model, these centres are embracing leisure, hospitality, education, and community engagement to ensure sustainability in an era of widespread retail disruption. According to The Boyce Group, the future of the high street belongs to those willing to innovate beyond shopping alone—a message underscored by their ongoing investments and strategic diversification at Kingsway.

### 📌 Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.southwalesargus.co.uk/news/25450781.kingsway-centre-shopping-bosses-unfazed-retail-woes/?ref=rss), [[4]](https://www.wales247.co.uk/the-6-month-transformation-of-the-kingsway-centre-newport), [[5]](https://www.thebusinessdesk.com/south-west/news/10444-bristol-developer-swoops-for-shopping-centre), [[7]](https://news.completelyretail.co.uk/newport-shopping-centre-snapped-up-by-developer/)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.southwalesargus.co.uk/news/25450781.kingsway-centre-shopping-bosses-unfazed-retail-woes/?ref=rss), [[2]](https://www.theundergroundnewport.com/), [[3]](https://www.gtcombat.com/copy-of-our-venues), [[4]](https://www.wales247.co.uk/the-6-month-transformation-of-the-kingsway-centre-newport)
* Paragraph 3 – [[1]](https://www.southwalesargus.co.uk/news/25450781.kingsway-centre-shopping-bosses-unfazed-retail-woes/?ref=rss), [[4]](https://www.wales247.co.uk/the-6-month-transformation-of-the-kingsway-centre-newport), [[6]](https://businessnewswales.com/reimagined-shopping-centre-welcomes-surge-in-new-tenants/)
* Paragraph 4 – [[1]](https://www.southwalesargus.co.uk/news/25450781.kingsway-centre-shopping-bosses-unfazed-retail-woes/?ref=rss), [[4]](https://www.wales247.co.uk/the-6-month-transformation-of-the-kingsway-centre-newport), [[5]](https://www.thebusinessdesk.com/south-west/news/10444-bristol-developer-swoops-for-shopping-centre), [[6]](https://businessnewswales.com/reimagined-shopping-centre-welcomes-surge-in-new-tenants/), [[7]](https://news.completelyretail.co.uk/newport-shopping-centre-snapped-up-by-developer/)
* Paragraph 5 – [[1]](https://www.southwalesargus.co.uk/news/25450781.kingsway-centre-shopping-bosses-unfazed-retail-woes/?ref=rss), [[5]](https://www.thebusinessdesk.com/south-west/news/10444-bristol-developer-swoops-for-shopping-centre), [[7]](https://news.completelyretail.co.uk/newport-shopping-centre-snapped-up-by-developer/)

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

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.southwalesargus.co.uk/news/25450781.kingsway-centre-shopping-bosses-unfazed-retail-woes/?ref=rss> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.theundergroundnewport.com/> - The Underground is an indoor venue located within the Kingsway Centre in Newport, South Wales, offering activities such as airsoft, axe throwing, and a rage room. These experiential activities aim to attract new audiences and extend visit times, driving secondary spending and injecting new energy into the centre. The venue provides a variety of events and game modes for all skill levels, fostering a welcoming community for airsoft enthusiasts. Additionally, the rage room offers a unique experience for stress relief, and axe throwing provides a fun activity for friends and family.
3. <https://www.gtcombat.com/copy-of-our-venues> - GT Combat's premier Airsoft venue, The Underground, is designed to provide an immersive and realistic combat experience for players of all skill levels. The facility features state-of-the-art equipment and a variety of game scenarios, making it an ideal place to test tactical skills and enjoy time with friends. In addition to airsoft, The Underground offers a rage room for stress relief and axe throwing for fun and competition. The venue also provides Nerf wars for children, birthday and event bookings, and is located at Unit 9 Kingsway Centre, Newport, NP20 1EB.
4. <https://www.wales247.co.uk/the-6-month-transformation-of-the-kingsway-centre-newport> - The Kingsway Centre in Newport has undergone significant transformation under new ownership by Niall Leighton-Boyce and the Boyce Group. In the first six months, the centre welcomed over 11 new businesses, including Delicious Delights, Secrets of Cymru, and Warren James. The introduction of The Underground, an indoor venue offering airsoft, axe throwing, and a rage room, has attracted new audiences and extended visit times. The centre has also secured planning permission for educational use, paving the way for academic partnerships and future university-led expansion, promising year-round footfall and a stronger local economy.
5. <https://www.thebusinessdesk.com/south-west/news/10444-bristol-developer-swoops-for-shopping-centre> - The Kingsway Shopping Centre in Newport has been acquired by Bristol-based property firm Boyce Group for £615,000, below the £1 million asking price. The new owners, led by Niall Leighton-Boyce, plan to transform the centre into a multi-use hub, including converting Sovereign House into residential accommodation and redeveloping Emlyn House into a public square. They aim to fill vacant units with leisure and hospitality operators, introduce a food court, and develop a soft play area, moving away from the traditional high street trend.
6. <https://businessnewswales.com/reimagined-shopping-centre-welcomes-surge-in-new-tenants/> - The Kingsway Centre in Newport has welcomed 11 new businesses in its first six months under new ownership by Boyce Group Ltd. The centre is being reimagined to attract shoppers into Newport city centre, with plans to convert Sovereign House into student accommodation and redevelop Emlyn House into Emlyn Square. The introduction of The Underground, an air-soft and paintball centre, is expected to bring a fresh demographic to the centre. The centre has also introduced a scheme with local schools to display student artwork and has undergone significant improvements, including new seating and planting.
7. <https://news.completelyretail.co.uk/newport-shopping-centre-snapped-up-by-developer/> - Boyce Group has acquired the Kingsway Shopping Centre in Newport for £615,000, with plans to transform it into a multi-use hub. The acquisition follows the centre's collapse into receivership in May 2023. Boyce Group, founded by Niall Leighton-Boyce in 2012, intends to convert Sovereign House into residential accommodation and redevelop Emlyn House into a public square. The developer aims to fill vacant commercial units with leisure and hospitality operators, introduce a food court, and establish a soft play area, moving away from the traditional high street trend.