# Bangor faces tough times as Britain’s worst seaside town with Menai Centre up for sale



In a stark reflection of changing fortunes, Bangor has been labelled as Britain's 'worst seaside town', scoring a mere 42% in a recent Which? survey. This designation, underscored by one-star ratings across food, shopping, and tourist attractions, serves as a sobering testament to the city's current state of decline. Following this disheartening ranking, the Menai Centre, Bangor’s principal shopping venue, has been placed on the market for just £4.2 million—only a fraction of its original construction cost of £18.5 million.

Once a vibrant hub during the Victorian era, Bangor's decline is starkly highlighted by its historical context. The city, known for its stunning views of the Menai Strait and as a gateway to Snowdonia National Park, saw its peak tourist activity significantly dwindle over the years. In fact, thirty years ago, Bangor thrived as a holiday hotspot, famously featuring in Fiddler's Dream's chart-topping song "Day Trip to Bangor". However, nostalgia clashes with reality today, as contemporary photographs depict a shopping centre that is now nearly 80% vacant, a stark image of economic stagnation.

Local sentiment has not been entirely overshadowed by the negative rankings. Bangor City Council expressed disappointment over the Which? survey results, asserting that such evaluations often overlook the city’s unique attributes and rich history. Besides its derelict shopping precinct, Bangor is still home to notable landmarks such as the sixth-century cathedral and the historic Victorian pier, which continue to attract those seeking cultural experiences. The council has asserted that these facets reflect a city rich in character, deserving of recognition beyond its current portrayal.

Moreover, the council is optimistic about the future as it prepares to celebrate Bangor’s 1,500-year anniversary in 2025. This milestone is seen as an opportunity to revitalise interest in the city through tourism. Visitors have highlighted Bangor's potential as a base for exploring the breathtaking landscapes of North Wales, further indicating that while the city faces considerable challenges, it also harbours opportunities for renewal.

The Menai Centre, once a beacon of retail, now stands ready for auction through property firm Savills, with prospective buyers submitting bids by June 10. The council hopes that the introduction of a new health centre in the former Debenhams site, funded by the Welsh Government, will inject vitality into the area, fostering foot traffic and encouraging economic regeneration.

Despite the criticisms levied through the recent survey, many visitors continue to appreciate Bangor’s cultural and scenic offerings. While its shopping and food ratings fell short, the city's charm—anchored by historic sites and its natural beauty—remains, indicating that Bangor’s story is far from over. As the city navigates its identity in the face of adversity, the aspirations for rejuvenation will undoubtedly be tested in the years to come.

## Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14757129/Britains-worst-seaside-town-drab-rundown-shopping-centre-sale.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[2]](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c4ngdv46kyyo)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14757129/Britains-worst-seaside-town-drab-rundown-shopping-centre-sale.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[3]](https://www.thebangoraye.com/bangor-rated-as-the-uks-worst-seaside-town/), [[6]](https://www.travelandtourworld.com/news/article/uks-bangor-named-the-worst-seaside-city-for-tourists-with-dismal-ratings-in-food-shopping-and-attractions-yet-praised-for-its-scenic-beauty/)
* Paragraph 3 – [[4]](https://www.nation.cymru/news/council-hits-back-at-claims-it-is-worst-seaside-town/), [[5]](https://www.herald.wales/north-wales/gwynedd/bangor-hits-back-after-being-named-uks-worst-seaside-town/)
* Paragraph 4 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14757129/Britains-worst-seaside-town-drab-rundown-shopping-centre-sale.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[6]](https://www.travelandtourworld.com/news/article/uks-bangor-named-the-worst-seaside-city-for-tourists-with-dismal-ratings-in-food-shopping-and-attractions-yet-praised-for-its-scenic-beauty/), [[7]](https://www.walesonline.co.uk/whats-on/uks-worst-seaside-town-named-29569269)
* Paragraph 5 – [[3]](https://www.thebangoraye.com/bangor-rated-as-the-uks-worst-seaside-town/), [[5]](https://www.herald.wales/north-wales/gwynedd/bangor-hits-back-after-being-named-uks-worst-seaside-town/)

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

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14757129/Britains-worst-seaside-town-drab-rundown-shopping-centre-sale.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c4ngdv46kyyo> - In July 2024, Bangor was ranked the UK's worst seaside town in a Which? survey, scoring just 42%. The survey highlighted the city's 'drab' and 'run down' appearance, with one-star ratings for food, shopping, and tourist attractions. Despite this, respondents praised Bangor's cultural assets, including its Victorian pier, sixth-century cathedral, and views of the Menai Strait. Bangor City Council expressed disappointment over the ranking, emphasizing the city's unique charms and historical significance. The council also highlighted Bangor's role as a gateway to Snowdonia National Park and its upcoming 1,500-year anniversary in 2025.
3. <https://www.thebangoraye.com/bangor-rated-as-the-uks-worst-seaside-town/> - A July 2024 survey by Which? rated Bangor as the UK's worst seaside town, with a score of 42%. The survey criticized the city for being 'drab' and 'run down', awarding one-star ratings for food, shopping, and tourist attractions. However, visitors appreciated Bangor's Victorian pier, sixth-century cathedral, and its role as a base for exploring Snowdonia National Park. The Bangor Aye article discusses the survey's findings and the city's response to the ranking.
4. <https://www.nation.cymru/news/council-hits-back-at-claims-it-is-worst-seaside-town/> - Following the Which? survey in July 2024, Bangor City Council expressed disappointment over being named the UK's worst seaside town. The council emphasized Bangor's rich history, cultural landmarks like St Deiniol’s Cathedral and the Pontio Arts Centre, and its status as the first and oldest city in Wales. They also highlighted the city's breathtaking views of the Menai Strait and its role as a gateway to Snowdonia National Park.
5. <https://www.herald.wales/north-wales/gwynedd/bangor-hits-back-after-being-named-uks-worst-seaside-town/> - In response to the Which? survey ranking Bangor as the UK's worst seaside town in July 2024, Bangor City Council expressed disappointment. The council highlighted the city's historical significance, cultural landmarks, and its upcoming 1,500-year anniversary in 2025. They also emphasized Bangor's role as a gateway to Snowdonia National Park and its breathtaking views of the Menai Strait.
6. <https://www.travelandtourworld.com/news/article/uks-bangor-named-the-worst-seaside-city-for-tourists-with-dismal-ratings-in-food-shopping-and-attractions-yet-praised-for-its-scenic-beauty/> - A survey by Which? Travel in April 2025 ranked Bangor as the UK's worst seaside city, with a 42% rating. The city received poor marks for food, shopping, and attractions but was praised for its scenic beauty, including the Victorian pier and views of the Menai Strait. Visitors noted Bangor's appeal as a base for exploring Snowdonia National Park.
7. <https://www.walesonline.co.uk/whats-on/uks-worst-seaside-town-named-29569269> - In January 2024, Which? surveyed 4,744 members about UK seaside towns, ranking Bangor last with a 42% score. Despite this, visitors appreciated Bangor's 'wonderful pier', 'really good restaurants', and its role as a base for exploring Snowdonia National Park. The article discusses the survey's findings and Bangor's response to the ranking.