

**NEWS RELEASE – 6<sup>th</sup> October 2025**

## **Britain's most valuable buildings revealed... and they're not what you think**

- *Community centres across Britain have hit the market at a staggering £500 million each, making them the most valuable buildings in Britain today*
- *The symbolic protest price reflects the urgent need for investment as funding for community services has fallen 18% since 2022, with more than 4,000 shared spaces lost every year*
- *Nearly half (49%) of people see centres, libraries and youth clubs as among the UK's most valuable buildings, while 41% express concerns for future generations if these places disappear altogether*

We're a nation obsessed with property – from endlessly scrolling fantasy homes on listings sites to marvelling at million-pound mansions on telly. In fact, over a fifth (21%) of Brits admit to regularly browsing sites like Rightmove and Zoopla just for fun<sup>1</sup>.

But this year's most eye-catching property listing doesn't come with a landscaped garden, spa-style hot tub or temperature-controlled wine cellar. In fact, you can't live in it at all.

Today, five community centres across the UK have hit the market at a symbolic £500 million each, making them, quite literally, Britain's Most Valuable Buildings. The listings – complete with an estate agent's video tour – have hijacked property websites, promoted on classified ads and even popping up in an estate agent's window, all in a bid to get policymakers to recognise the true value of our shared spaces and the scale of the crisis they face.

Because that price tag is more than a stunt – it's a wakeup call. The campaign by Crown Paints spotlights buildings in regions among the hardest hit by local authority cuts, drawing attention to the real value of the UK's shared spaces. The warning is clear – unless the UK finds the £1 billion that experts at Locality<sup>2</sup> say is urgently needed, libraries, youth clubs and community halls will disappear, and with them, the beating heart of our communities, permanently.

Freedom Of Information data shows local funding has fallen 18% since 2022<sup>3</sup>, and more than 4,000 public buildings are sold off every year. Yet new research commissioned by Crown Paints reveals people value them deeply. Nearly half (49%) of people say they are among the UK's most important buildings, and over a third (34%) say having access to community spaces has a positive impact on their mental health and wellbeing.

The study of 2,000 people also found that 35% say these spaces help them escape loneliness, while over a fifth (22%) say how it's noticeable when one closes. Most telling of all – nearly nine in ten (87%) say vibrant community spaces are important with 41% expressing concerns for future generations if these places disappear altogether.

In partnership with Mind, the campaign highlights the link between community spaces and mental health, and how vital these spaces are in tackling loneliness and providing safe, supportive environments.

**Amanda Bolton, a spokesperson for the campaign at Crown Paints said:** “From mega mansions to new builds, we're a nation that's hooked on property. But we rarely talk about the places that aren't for sale – our shared spaces. These are the buildings where real life happens. The toddler groups, the art classes, and those evening drama clubs. St Leonard's Youth & Community Centre in Liverpool is just one of many examples up and down the country. By listing them at this price, we're making these important spaces between visible. Because Britain's most valuable buildings aren't penthouses. They're the community centres and the spaces that hold our communities together.”

**Andrew Berrie, Head of Corporate Partnerships at Mind, added:** "Community spaces are important for our mental wellbeing. They provide accessible, welcoming places to connect with others and help reduce loneliness, which can have a negative impact on mental health.

"Crown's research shows the public feel their loss deeply, with many worried about the impact on future generations. Protecting these spaces must be part of the national conversation on mental health."

As part of the campaign, Crown Paints has launched an online hub with fundraising tips for community centres. This forms part of Crown's wider [Project Possible](#) commitment to supporting communities through the power of paint, with the ambition of donating 50,000 litres of paint or more to support community projects nationwide.

**Amanda continued:** "From creating more joyful spaces through the power of colour, to supporting community regeneration with uplifting murals and paint projects, we're helping communities to grow and thrive. This campaign builds on our Project Possible commitments, showing how we can play a meaningful part in the places that matter most."

Watch the campaign video here: <https://about.crownpaints.com/projectpossible/campaigns>.

## **CASE STUDY LISTINGS – BRITAIN'S MOST VALUABLE BUILDINGS**

### **St Leonard's Youth & Community Centre, Bootle, Liverpool**

A building that's been serving Bootle since the 1800s, now a lifeline in one of the most deprived areas in the UK. Today St Leonard's Youth & Community Centre is a go-to hub in times of crisis - from floods to food poverty - offering food, advice, classes and care to hundreds each week. Its true value lies not in the size of its hall but in the dignity restored, the crises averted, and the community rebuilt within its walls.

*Debbie Shelley, Centre Manager, said:* "St Leonard's has always been more than a building – it's the place our community turns to when they need connection or support. Listing it as one of Britain's Most Valuable Buildings is a reminder that the services we provide are priceless to the people who rely on them."

### **Loughborough Wellbeing Centre, Loughborough**

Once an unloved gym, now a safe and welcoming hub. Opened in 2022, the Wellbeing Centre has been rebuilt by volunteers and local businesses, transforming it into a place where anyone can find company, confidence and care. From creative cafés to men's groups and peer support sessions, its true value lies not in the rooms themselves, but in the lives changed within them.

### **Boomerang Community Centre, Dundee**

This 8,305 sq ft hub has been the beating heart of Stobswell since 1987. Its true value lies in the hot meals shared around its tables, the youth clubs that give young people a safe place to grow, and the support groups that carry people through grief and loneliness. From toddlers learning to bake to a 98-year-old still teaching tea dances, Boomerang shows how belonging is built - through food, friendship and generations coming together under one roof.

### **Granton:hub, Edinburgh**

Housed in historic Madelvic House, this volunteer-run hub is where culture, memory and community converge. From affordable artist studios to yoga classes and local history archives, it offers opportunities for learning, creativity and connection. Its true value lies not in its rooms, but in the spirit it preserves and the belonging it creates.

### **Craigrothie Village Hall, Fife**

A modest four-room hall, but priceless to the people it serves. For half a century, Craigrothie has been the stage for weddings, ceilidhs, clubs and community suppers. Its walls hold the history of a village, its kitchen fuels friendship over food, and its true value lies in the role it plays as the heartbeat of rural life.

## ENDS

### Notes to editors

1. Consumer research was conducted through an online survey with OnePoll of a nationally represented sample of 2,000 UK adults aged 18 – 65+. The research was conducted 9-12<sup>th</sup> September 2025.
2. A report from Locality, a national network supporting community ownership of buildings and spaces, show figures of £1bn needed in a Community Asset Investment Plan. The plan outlines a strategic investment in the UK's shared infrastructure — from libraries and youth centres to community halls — aiming to protect and future-proof vital spaces. [Locality-Places-and-spaces-report-final.pdf](#)
3. Freedom of Information (FOI) requests were conducted to 155 local authorities to gather information on the total expenditure related to culture and related services for each local authority between 2022 and 2024. 96 local authorities responded and data is based on this response pool. Local authorities responded to an enquiry asking for: the total expenditure allocated to culture and related services budget in 2022, 2023 and 2024 to date. Culture and related community services may include but not limited to libraries, sports centres, arts facilities, parks, etc. Note: FY24-25 budgeted expenditure provided.
4. About community asset sell-offs: Locality data shows over 4,000 publicly owned buildings and spaces are sold off in England each year — more than four times the number of Starbucks outlets across the UK. <https://locality.org.uk/reports/the-great-british-sell-off#:~:text=We%20were%20shocked%20to%20learn,off%20on%20a%20massive%20scale>.

### About Crown Paints

As one of the UK's leading paint brands, Crown supports specifiers, painters and decorators and homeowners to paint their own possible and create beautiful, transformative spaces for everyone to enjoy.

Founded in 1777, Crown is one of the UK's oldest paint manufacturers, with a wealth of expertise and heritage in manufacturing quality paints and coatings.

Today Crown operates across two manufacturing sites in Darwen and Hull, with a network of more than 150 Crown Decorating Centres in the UK and Ireland.

Crown's retail offering includes the Walls & Ceilings range, the tough and durable easyclean range, and its premium range, CRAFTED.

Crown Trade includes a full suite of interior and exterior ranges, including the newly launched Clean Extreme range, as well as a range of other specialist coatings.

The manufacturer also has two woodcare and exterior ranges, Sadolin and Sandtex, which have both been developed with advanced technology, helping to protect and enhance a range of materials.

As an industry leader in innovation and sustainability, Crown knows what a positive difference they can make to people and the planet.

In 2023, Crown launched a new environmental and social strategy, Project Possible, which includes ambitious targets to become carbon neutral across all manufacturing operations by 2026, drive full circularity across product and packaging through recycling schemes, eradicate all waste to landfill and ensure 100% of paint containers make maximum use of recycled and recyclable materials.

### A Part of Hempel

Crown is part of Hempel Group, a global coatings company majority owned by The Hempel Foundation, an organisation dedicated to supporting biodiversity, empowering children through education and driving initiatives that create positive change.

The company's environmental and social initiatives as part of Project Possible, as well as some of the profits from paint sales, all contribute to Hempel's efforts, helping to make a difference not just in the UK & Ireland, but across the world.

[www.crownpaints.com](http://www.crownpaints.com)

[www.crownpaints.co.uk](http://www.crownpaints.co.uk)

[www.crownpaintsprofessional.com](http://www.crownpaintsprofessional.com)

## About Mind

Mind, the mental health charity, provide advice and support to empower anyone experiencing a mental health problem. They campaign to improve services, raise awareness and promote understanding. They won't give up until everyone experiencing a mental health problem gets both support and respect. [mind.org.uk](https://www.mind.org.uk)

Mind has several mental health helplines for people aged 18 and above:

- Mind support line for adults: advisors are trained to listen and help find specialist support if needed. Call 0300 102 1234 (lines open 9am to 6pm, Monday to Friday).
- Mind Infoline: a confidential information and support line available on 0300 123 3393 (lines open 9am - 6pm, Monday – Friday)
- Welfare benefits line: for anyone with mental health problems who is navigating the benefits and welfare system. Call 0300 222 5782 (lines open 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday).
- Legal line: offers legal information and general advice on mental health related law in England and Wales. Call 0300 466 6463 (lines open 9am to 6pm, Monday to Friday).

The ongoing cost-of-living crisis is affecting many people's mental health. For more information on managing money and your mental health, visit the [Mind website](https://www.mind.org.uk)

Mind's online mental health community Side by Side is a safe space where anyone aged 18 and over with experience of a mental health problem can share their story, connect with others, access Mind's wider information and resources, and give support in return. Find out more at [www.sidebyside.mind.org.uk](https://www.sidebyside.mind.org.uk)