

Fame doesn't pay (unless you're a castle): all 13 houses on Brookside Close sold for £735,000, and only one famous British home has ever beaten the market

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A study of 37 famous British film and TV locations finds the houses sold for what the street sells for, or didn't sell at all. The money went to the castles.

In December 2008 an anonymous bidder bought one of the most famous streets in the country. All 13 houses on Brookside Close, built for Channel 4's soap and watched by millions for 21 years, went under the hammer in a single lot for £735,000. That is less than a third of the guide price on Juliet's house from Love Actually, and less than a tenth of what the Notting Hill house with the blue door is asking.

It is the clearest finding in a new study of 37 famous British locations: a famous address adds nothing to a house, and sometimes takes something away. Only one British house in the study has ever sold for more than the market would pay. It was Sleddale Hall, a derelict Cumbrian farmhouse with no proper road, which played Uncle Monty's cottage in Withnail and I. Guide price at auction: £145,000. Top bid: £265,000. The bidders were fans.

Everyone else got the going rate or less. Nora Batty's cottage in Holmfirth went on the market in 2006 at £169,950 and took more than ten years to find a buyer. The Suffolk house where Harry Potter was born was listed at £995,000, cut to £950,000, and withdrawn when nobody came. The Good Life house sold this April for £1.44 million, the same as every other detached house on the road. 4 Privet Drive was listed at £475,000, like its neighbours. Doc Martin's surgery had its guide price cut before the final series aired.

The money went somewhere else. Seventeen of the 37 locations now make a living from the cameras, and none of them is a semi. Alnwick Castle's visitors rose 120% after it became Hogwarts. Doune Castle's nearly doubled in two years after Outlander. Lyme Park's tripled after Colin Firth walked out of the lake. Downton income helped Highclere pay for an estimated £12 million of repairs. After Bridgerton, visits to Castle Howard's website by 18 to 24-year-olds rose by 3,408%.

For the people still living in a famous house, fame is a bill. The owner of Drayton House, the Saltsburn estate, has counted more than 50 fans trespassing off the footpath. Neighbours of the Paddington house in Primrose Hill wrote to complain that their street was being 'pimped for profit'. The owner of Juliet's front door from Love Actually has put the door itself up for auction, estimate £3,000 to £5,000, because she wants a break from the tourists. The blue door in Notting Hill was sold for charity years ago and its replacement painted black.

The exception is Barry. Uncle Bryn's house from Gavin & Stacey was listed in February at £210,000, bought by fans, and now lets for £482 for two nights. Doris's house opposite went to another fan couple for just over £220,000. Fame pays when the buyers are the audience. Most of the time, they aren't.

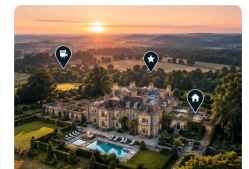
Nick Statman, Bettermove's CEO, explains how the study began:

"It started as a chat in the Bettermove break room about Ferris Bueller's Day Off and ended up down a full blown rabbit hole.

Our team spends their days working out what houses are worth, making offers and understanding what adds value and what doesn't, so when two of our resident film buffs had a passionate discussion about what a famous movie house was worth, naturally we all got involved - a hundred houses and a lot of auction records later, the 'Does Fame Add value?' map was born and gave us a surprisingly clear conclusion - houses from famous films or TV shows are worth what the house next door is worth and sometimes less. The only ones that made real money were turned into tourist attractions. The few that fetched a premium on the open market were fought over by fans who wanted the house more than the market did. In most cases, the story behind a property adds nothing."

The full study, with the history, prices and current fate of all 100 homes on an interactive map, is at <https://www.bettermove.co.uk/property-stories/famous-film-and-tv-homes/>

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