



Left: Mapleton Crescent, SW18, with affordable homes from Pocket Living

From £720,000: Prince of Wales Drive flats, right, with one to three bedrooms (020 3740 3133)

From £559,000: centre and far right, Battersea Exchange, SW8, studios and flats with up to three bedrooms. Call JLL (020 3553 6811)



# Wandsworth: for families who don't want to leave London



From £485,000: resale one-bedroom flats at The Filaments, 340 new homes in Buckhold Road, Wandsworth town centre

It's hard to leave leafy, low-tax SW18. Young professionals can now settle in new family homes and avoid a long commute, says **Emily Wright**

CHANCES are you will have had – or at least overheard – the “moving-to-the-country” chat, if you have lived in London longer than 10 years. Probably more than once. The gist tends to be pretty much the same each time: country homes are cheaper, there's more space, cleaner air and the grass is quite literally greener. But the reality of swapping urban buzz for a two-hour commute can be a tough transition to make in one fell swoop. Luckily, this city is peppered with peripheral halfway houses – “last chance saloon” boroughs that are perfect for a period of gentle acclimatisation. Over the years, Wandsworth has become one of the most popular. Known for its green space, low council tax and an abundance of leafy, Victorian terrace-lined streets, this district is a firm favourite with families. But there is more to the borough than the yarmyummy reputation that earned it the nickname “Bilberries with a twist”. And a hefty influx of new development is already re-establishing SW18 as a vibrant, up-and-coming hotspot.

**NOT JUST A NAPPY VALLEY** From Clapham to Balham and from Earlsfield to Putney, there can be no denying that pockets of Wandsworth are bona fide Nappy Valley strongholds. But the borough will see more new homes built than any other in London between now and 2024, and this stock will have a far wider appeal. “A lot of the new homes will be flats,” says Chris Jago, partner at local agency Houston Lawrence. “There is definitely a rebalancing happening and a fresh focus on young professionals as an alternative to the small and large family housing options the borough is already well known for.” The good news for a



fresh breed of buyer is that most of the fundamentals that make Wandsworth so popular with young families have universal appeal. Topping the list, it's still affordable – in south-west London terms at least – with average prices for SW18 hovering at just under £550,000, Estates Gazette research shows.

Despite being in Zone 3, Wandsworth is well connected. Served by both the District line Tube and the Overground, trains run into Waterloo from Wandsworth Town and Earlsfield in about 20 minutes. Add a spruce-up in terms of shops, bars and restaurants, as the likes of Pret A Manger, Waitrose and Pizza Storm roll in to complement the area's existing array of independent delis and coffee shops, and you have yourself a burgeoning hotspot. This fact has not been lost on developers. The roster of new schemes under construction or planned for the area is as vast as it is diverse. From Frasers Property's luxury Riverside Quarter

scheme, where two-bedroom flats overlooking the Thames and across to the exclusive Hurlingham Club start at £745,000, to pod housing provider Pocket Living's 27-storey Mapleton Crescent tower on the Wandsworth Town, Earlsfield border, there are plenty of options at varying price points.

**REDEVELOPMENT SURGE** This influx of new homes has been bolstered further as a number of large sites have been freed up for redevelopment. The eight-acre former Young's Brewery in Wandsworth Town, just west of recently upgraded Southside Wandsworth shopping centre, is soon to be transformed into The Ram Quarter scheme by Chinese developer Greenland Group. It will bring a new square and heart to the area plus 650 new homes, with two-to-four-bedroom flats and duplexes from £802,000. Other new Wandsworth schemes worth considering include St William's

**Family favourite:** Wandsworth is popular for its green space including the commons. Above right and far right, The Ram Quarter, with new apartments from £802,000. Call JLL (020 3553 6811)



**Prince of Wales Drive and Taylor Wimpey's Battersea Exchange** with prices starting at £720,000 and £589,000 respectively. Houston Lawrence's Jago says: “We are clearly seeing a massive commercial regeneration that will make Wandsworth an even more desirable place to live. The vibrancy in SW18 has already lifted to a much higher level thanks to



the development of the mixed-use schemes and the upgrade of Wandsworth High Street. And then there are the riverside developments including Riverside Quarter and Taylor Wimpey's Radius schemes. When you look at what they have done for the area already – there is now a fantastic river bus commuting option, for example.”



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AS THE residential side of riverside regeneration gets under way, local amenities are also on the up: “We are already seeing nurseries, dry cleaners, gyms and local supermarkets opening up,” adds Jago. “The area is really coming into its own and regenerating in a way that will make it as popular with a new demographic of buyer as it has traditionally been with families.”

Emily Wright is features and global editor of Estates Gazette.



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