

# Home of the week

The home of an airline captain whose flair for interiors took flight over lockdown

**B**olingbroke Grove is one of Wandsworth's most sought-after addresses. Named after the politician and political philosopher Henry St John, 1st Viscount Bolingbroke, its Victorian houses stretch along the eastern side of Wandsworth Common in southwest London.

The transformation of No52 has been a labour of love for Joanna Vickery and her husband, Alfonso Carvajal. When they bought the four-bedroom townhouse in 2014 it was in need of TLC. "Crazy people like us strip something back and build it again," Vickery says.

They increased the living space of the mid-terrace from 1,746 sq ft to 3,123 sq ft, adding a basement and attic, and installed home tech, including an integrated music system, temperature control and ventilation.

Carvajal, an airline captain, says: "It took nearly 18 months to start because of planning permission. We moved into the attic in 2016, when it was still a building site."

They have installed structural beams, floorboards and walls. The ground floor now comprises a reception room with a bay window and bespoke parquet flooring, plus a cloakroom and boot room. The dream kitchen/dining space has ample storage, a San Simone quartzite surface and backsplash, plus top-spec fixtures such as a combination steam oven.

Inspirations include Spain, Morocco and the Victorian industrial era. "We felt we had free rein to do what we wanted in the new parts of the house," Vickery says. The basement has polished concrete

floors with a library, study, playroom and kitchen. The top floor has a bedroom with en suite shower room. "I do yoga up there, looking at the skyline — it's so quiet."

The first floor is the main bedroom, a dressing room and en suite with a double vanity, freestanding tub and walk-in shower. The garden backs on to St Michael's Church. "You can imagine the colours from the stained glass," Carvajal says. There is gallery-standard lighting throughout, installed on the advice of a Sotheby's specialist. Vickery was the head of Russian art at Sotheby's until recently but now runs an art advisory (vickery.art). "We have contemporary Cubans and Russian art. Lighting is key," she says.

Her husband now has his own interior design business, Carvajal (carvajal.global) after going part-time at easyJet and taking a design course. "I designed pretty much all of [the house]," he says. The couple have two girls — Isabel, three, and Amelia,

seven months — and are relocating to Madrid to be closer to family in Spain.

Alex McMorroff of Hamptons' Battersea branch, who is handling the sale, says: "The renovations are lovely — and a bit different from everybody else's. My favourite room is the library. It's really classy, with lined bookshelves and a [temperature-controlled] wine cellar."

It's a short walk to the shops and restaurants of Northcote Road and Bellevue Road; Wandsworth Common station is a five-minute walk. Vickery says: "We feel lucky that the park is there. It kept us going during Covid."

By Victoria Brzezinski  
hamptons.co.uk



£2.975 million



## SW11 The postcode in numbers

In this part of London 31% of properties for sale are under offer, falling to 18% of those costing £2 million or more

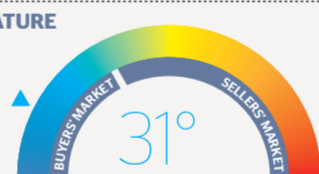
11%

Increase in buyer demand in the past year

£859,157 is the average house price

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### Best cities to invest in

What makes a city a good investment (Melissa York writes)? Rising house prices, big rental yields, a thriving local economy or the promise of a new train line?

All of the above, according to advisers at the consultancy Colliers, which ranked the top ten cities to invest in.

Its first report named Cambridge as the best city, acknowledging that while house prices are relatively high, its world-class university, strong reputation in tech and business and the attractive quality of life make it a good bet.

"Our analysis has confirmed our suspicions that the likes of Bristol, Manchester and Edinburgh present good investment opportunities but we've also identified a couple of less 'mainstream' options for investors to seriously consider," says Andrew White, the head of residential at Colliers.

"Belfast and Leeds

rank strongly for affordability indicators, while Milton Keynes performs well for local services and rental yield scores, which for some may be worth consideration."

Cities had to rank highly in four categories to make the list: economic; research and development; liveability; and property factors, such as affordability, rental yields and house price increases.

### Life for rent

One in four London renters have given up on the dream of homeownership, according to a survey.

One in six British tenants questioned by the polling company YouGov said they did not think they would ever be able to own their own home but 24 per cent of those in the capital felt the same despite earning more on average.

Official figures show that the average weekly wage in the UK is £479 a week but it is £640 a week in London. The results suggest that high house prices are the main obstacle, with 28 per cent of people in inner London, where prices

are higher, resigned to a life of renting, compared with 22 per cent in the suburbs. The vast majority of Londoners still choose owning over renting, with 96 per cent saying they want to be homeowners one day compared with 95 per cent of Brits in general. Of those who haven't given up hope, they expect to be able to buy at the age of 35 on average.

A similar percentage of white Londoners (23 per cent) have parked their dreams of homeownership to those from ethnic minorities (24 per cent), even though they are far more likely to get on the property ladder.

Sixty-two per cent of white Londoners are homeowners, compared with 35 per cent of those from an ethnic minority, according to the English Housing Survey.

Hopes and aspirations are more likely to be affected by income and class, according to the poll of more than 2,200 adults.

Nearly a third of Londoners (32 per cent) in social grade C2DE, who tend to do manual work, say they will never hold the keys to their own home. This is nearly double (18 per cent) the number of professional

Londoners. One in nine Britons in the top social grade have given up on homeownership (11 per cent), compared with about a quarter (26 per cent) of those in the lowest income group.

### For the hound that has everything

Should you have a four-figure sum to spare and a desire to spoil your pandemic puppy, why not invest in a handcrafted metal pet bed with organic mattress (writes Katrina Burroughs).

The Cornish Bed Company foundry, in Par, near St Austell, makes dog beds (above) based on Victorian originals, which include an upholstered mattress filled with organic coir and lamb's wool, made by hand in Devon by Naturalmat. Each one can be ordered bespoke. Victorian pet beds start at £995 and day beds cost from £1,200 for the border terrier-sized design.

cornishbeds.co.uk

## What £750,000 buys you in ...

Compiled by Victoria Brzezinski  
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View the UK's most luxurious residential properties  
**MANSION GLOBAL**  
mansionsglobal.com/london

### Yorkshire

Anchor House stands by the banks of the River Derwent in Bubwith, a pretty village 12 miles southeast of York. Built in about 1750, the five-bedroom 2,953 sq ft house has top-spec flood defences (with two automatic water pumps). Accommodation includes a dining/garden room plus a breakfast kitchen with a separate utility room. There's also a gym, as well as a rainwater collection system, solar water heating and a boat launching crane, plus a double garage with EV charging point and wine cellars. The riverside gardens include a gorgeous weeping willow and large timber deck with a gazebo.

**Air pollution** 75mcg/m<sup>3</sup> particulate pollution annual average, 25mcg/m<sup>3</sup> below the WHO guideline of 10mcg/m<sup>3</sup>.

**Upside** It's not overlooked.

**Downside** The flood risk.

**Contact** blenkinandco.com



£750,000

### Hampshire

This 19th-century townhouse is on a row of smart stuccoed terraces in the heart of Winchester, a regional winner in this year's Best Places to Live in *The Sunday Times*. Arranged over four floors, the grade II listed four-bedroom house has two reception rooms, two bathrooms and a garden with a terrace and two handy sheds. There is gated pedestrian access at the back. The rooms feature high ceilings, stripped floorboards and large windows with views over the nearby almshouses and Winchester Cathedral. A hop away from the high street, it is a 12-minute walk to Winchester station for trains to London Waterloo in a shade under an hour.

**Air pollution** 9.8mcg/m<sup>3</sup>, 0.2mcg/m<sup>3</sup> below the WHO guideline of 10mcg/m<sup>3</sup>.

**Upside** Great schooling near by.

**Downside** Little scope for extension.

**Contact** knightfrank.co.uk



£750,000

### Powys

The Red House is a three-storey Georgian townhouse with four handsomely proportioned reception rooms featuring original fireplaces, timber panelling and ornate corniced ceilings. The grade II listed six-bedroom house is in central Presteigne, a small town close to the English border, and there are plenty of pubs, restaurants and farm shops selling top-quality local produce within walking distance. If 5,427 sq ft of living space in the main house isn't enough, there's also an outbuilding (used as a utility room and two storage rooms), plus a lovely south-facing walled garden.

**Air pollution** 6.9mcg/m<sup>3</sup>, 3.1mcg/m<sup>3</sup> below the WHO guideline of 10mcg/m<sup>3</sup>.

**Upside** The entrance hall has the wow factor.

**Downside** Keeping that perfect lawn.

**Contact** struttandparker.com



£750,000

### South Africa

Bloubergstrand — which translates as "blue mountain beach" in Afrikaans — is a seaside suburb set along the shores of Table Bay, about nine miles north of the centre of Cape Town. With two bars, two dining rooms and a snooker room, this six-bedroom house is made for entertaining. The 9,150 sq ft property sits high on Blouberg Hill and features a top-floor entertainment area designed by Stefan Antoni (of the architecture practice SAOTA) with 360-degree views over Table Mountain and the Atlantic Ocean. There's also a self-contained guest flat, plus housekeeper accommodation, a laundry room and a five-car garage. The airport is a half-hour drive.

**Upside** Chic, sleek and within a ten-minute walk of the beach.

**Downside** A lot of house to manage.

**Contact** hamptons-international.com



£722,000