



IT'S GOOD TO WALK

Discover why Londoners are taking the scenic route to work on foot

Words FIONA BRANDHORST

Walking to work in London is now possible as developers launch smart new residential schemes at the heart of the capital's burgeoning business hubs. Location is the key driver for Londoners, which is why many housebuilders are choosing prime sites in zones one and two, says Darren McCormack, Sales and Marketing Director for Taylor Wimpey Central London. 'Our latest scheme, Palace View, is perfectly positioned within reach of Westminster and Victoria offering picturesque views of Lambeth Bridge and the River Thames,' he says. The 55 one, two and three-bedroom apartments and penthouses overlooking the medieval Lambeth Palace are the capital's last central riverside regeneration area, just a 16 minute walk to Westminster. Prices start from £880,000.

Located within the Division Bell area

of the Houses of Parliament and close to Smith Square in the heart of Westminster, Chestertons is selling a large one bedroom flat in a prestigious red brick mansion building in Little Smith Street. Refurbished by the current owners, it offers almost 700 sq ft of accommodation and is priced at £825,000 including a share of freehold.

The beauty of central living is that you can beat the bus and sometimes the Tube with a 30 minute walk to many of the new business hotspots in the Strand, Oxford Street and Bond Street from one of Belgravia's sought-after traditional squares close to Victoria. Hathaways is selling a Regency style, interior designed, six bedroom stucco townhouse in Victoria Square. Comprising 3,724 sq ft and with a guide price of £6.1m it's a good contrast to the brand new apartments launches in neighbouring streets. Hedge fund and oil executives are



Being able to avoid the uncomfortable commute to work is a huge advantage

property



increasingly able to mix business with pleasure in St James's as the residential offering in the area expands. A few minutes' walk to the office is possible from Beau House, a boutique scheme of seven apartments at the heart of Jermyn Street by super-prime developer Dukelease Properties, with prices from £2m. The 4,000 sq ft penthouse designed by Oliver Burns features an expansive private roof terrace and a price tag in excess of £15m.

Bloomsbury has become increasingly residential over the last five years and there's still value to be found in such a central location. 'While homes in its garden squares now command close to West End prices, Bloomsbury's 1960s architecture offers more affordable alternatives,' says David Fell, Research Analyst at Hamptons International. 'Flats in the Brutalist Brunswick Centre go for 15% less than their period counterparts and are increasingly attractive to media professionals who work nearby.'

As King's Cross transforms into one of the capital's most vibrant, cultural and well-connected destinations, a moment's walk from major business hubs, living

and working at its heart is a reality. Taylor Wimpey's Central London's Onyx Apartments on the picturesque Regent's Canal is a new striking collection of 117 one, two and three-bedroom apartments. King's Cross and St Pancras stations are also on its doorstep forming one of Britain's biggest transport hubs. Prices start from £675,000. Islington Square apartments in the converted Edwardian Royal Mail sorting office will be completed towards the end of next year and are perfectly located for a 30 minute walk to work in the city. Prices start from £725,000 with Savills and Knight Frank.

Located in Zone One, residents at Berkeley Homes latest launch of apartments at 250 City Road will be a ten minute walk from some of London's most buoyant employment markets including Silicon Roundabout and the Square Mile. The first phase of 263 apartments features the 42-storey Carrara Tower where prices start from £850,000 for a one-bedroom apartment. Piers Clanford, Managing Director at Berkeley Homes (North East London) says: '250 City Road is unrivalled in terms of proximity to the capital's most dynamic

Walking distance to the city from Berkeley Homes' 250 City Road, above, and Victoria Square's Regency townhouse, right



employment hubs and will help further establish the area's position as a residential destination.'

The Heron, a five minute walk from Liverpool Street in the heart of the city fringe, is where Sotheby's is selling a two bedroom luxury apartment with a guide price of £2,950,000. Situated on the 31st floor the property has access to a residents-only private club that comprises a gym, roof garden, cinema, library, bar and restaurant, all a quick hop from the office.

With a thriving business community on CIT's South Bank Tower's doorstep and a short walk across nearby Blackfriars Bridge and into the city,

residents also have access to a business suite and lounge that can be booked for private events for those that need to take work home or perhaps impress clients. Prices start from £1.8m for a two bedroom apartment.

The ability to walk to work is becoming one of the biggest contributors to improving the lifestyle of those who live and work in London adds James Hyman, Head of Residential Agency at Cluttons. 'As working hours are longer due to accommodating many time zones across the globe, being able to avoid the uncomfortable, and at times very unpredictable commute, is a huge advantage to buyers.'