

## LOCAL AREA GUIDE

### Kingston upon Thames

History | Surrounding Villages | Property Types | Schools | Things to Do  
Shopping & Leisure | Travel Connections

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# Welcome



Kingston upon Thames is in the Royal Borough and on the river of the same name, about ten miles south-west of Central London. It dropped its hyphens in 1965 when it became part of Greater London. It's also now often referred to as just Kingston.

The town is well connected when it comes to transport, and it's in London's Zone 6. It's a popular place to live for commuters into Central London and for those who love to go west at weekends. The population is around 150,000.



Kingston is an affluent place. Indeed, shopping seems to be a favoured past-time. A recent CACI study ranked Kingston 28th in the UK's Hot 100 Retail Locations, but Kingston has more going for it than just shopping. Think music, literature, *Three Men in a Boat*.

Kingston is almost surrounded by lovely big parks. Hampton Court Park and Bushy Park are opposite across the Thames, Richmond Park and Wimbledon Common to its north-west.



It's fair to say that Kingston could be deemed an aspirational place to live, with aspirational property prices too. It's also well served by some excellent educational establishments, including its own university.



# History of Kingston upon Thames



"Kingston is down in  
the Domesday Book  
as held by William  
the Conqueror,  
rendered at  
£31 10s."

Historically, Kingston grew as a settlement at a handy crossing point of the River Thames. Kingston is so called because Saxon kings used to be consecrated on a big sarsen stone next to the river. These days the same Coronation Stone is in Kingston upon Thames Guildhall, but it's hoped that it will be moved back to its original home in the churchyard of the Grade I All Saints Church next to the river sometime soon.

The Middle Ages saw Kingston being granted a few charters by kings, but it was finally confirmed as a Royal Borough by George V in 1927.

The early 19th century saw a big settlement boom around Kingston that came with the building of the railways. The southern part of this development was later called Surbiton.

Before and during the two world wars, Kingston made planes big time. These were mainly fighters like the Sopwith Camel, the Hurricane and the Harrier Jump Jet. Starting as Sopwith Aviation, the industry eventually became British Aerospace.

Recent years have seen Kingston settling comfortably with its place in the world. It's not Central London. It's not the Wild West. It's happy, just where and what it is, a charming metropolitan area alongside a languid meander of one of the world's greatest rivers.





# Property Types in Kingston upon Thames



Kingston upon Thames is a popular place to live. There are two postcodes for the town, mainly KT1 and some of KT2. The KT2 postcode part of Kingston has a higher average value in terms of residential property.

There's a good mix of excellent housing stock, ranging from detached houses in the million pounds plus region (think Coombe Hill and Kingston Hill) to trendy little flats and studios. In between the two are lots of Victorian semi-detached and terraced houses. About 70 per cent of the area is green space. The borough is deemed to have one of the lowest crime rates in the UK.



Kingston is a desirable place to live for young families who want a bit more space than they can find or afford in Central London and who want good schools nearby. As a university town, it has a significant student population, and therefore a strong rental market, giving the town a young feel. People also love to live near the river.

"A medieval oak  
in Hampton Court  
Park is said to be  
750 years old."

Another attraction is that property in Kingston is generally not as expensive as neighbouring Twickenham and Richmond.





# *Schools and Colleges in Kingston upon Thames*

There are lots of Ofsted-rated Good and Outstanding pre-schools, primary and secondary schools in and around Kingston. Independent schools and further education establishments are also well represented. The main draws of the latter are the impressive Kingston University with over 20,000 students, Kingston College, Kingston Business School, and Hillcroft College.

## **Nursery and Pre-Schools**

Burlington Infant and Nursery School: Ofsted Outstanding  
Collis Primary School: Ofsted Outstanding  
Hampton Wick Infant and Nursery School: Ofsted Outstanding  
Surbiton Children's Centre Nursery: Ofsted Outstanding  
Tolworth Infant and Nursery School: Ofsted Outstanding

## **Primary Schools**

Coombe Hill Junior School: Ofsted Outstanding  
Fern Hill Primary School: Ofsted Outstanding  
St Luke's CofE Primary School: Ofsted Outstanding  
King Athelstan Primary School: Ofsted Good  
St Andrew's & St Mark's CofE Junior School: Ofsted Outstanding

## **Secondary Schools**

Coombe Girls' School: Ofsted Outstanding  
The Holy Cross School: Ofsted Outstanding  
The Kingston Academy: Ofsted Outstanding  
Tiffin School: Ofsted Outstanding  
The Tiffin Girls' School: Ofsted Outstanding

## **Independent Schools**

Educare Small School  
Kingston Grammar School  
Park Hill School  
Surbiton High School  
Holy Cross Preparatory School

## **Local Further Education**

Richmond and Hillcroft College  
Kingston Business School  
Kingston College  
Kingston University: Ofsted Outstanding  
South Thames Colleges Group



"Roy Plomley, of Desert Island Discs fame, was born in Kingston in 1914."



# Things to Do in Kingston upon Thames



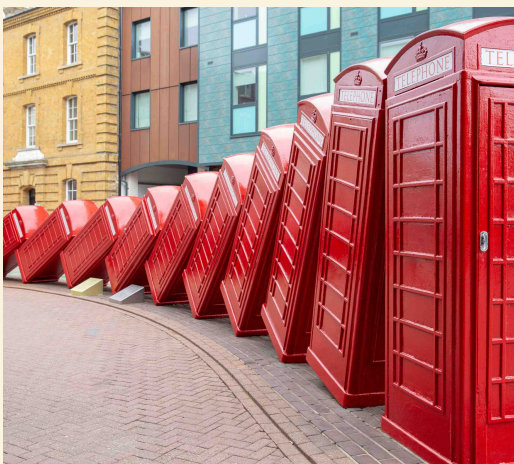
## Kingston Museum

A visit here is a great way to get to grips with all things Kingston. The Ancient Origins exhibition will help you delve into the Kingston area's prehistory. The Town of Kings exhibition will hold your hand through the dark Middle Ages right up to the Second World War. And Eadweard Muybridge gallery will give you a fascinating glimpse of the work of this Kingston-born photographer. Yes, that is how he spelt his name (it's Edward in Saxon).



## Dorich House

If sculpture floats your boat, drift over to this compelling collection of Art Nouveau-influenced figurative and portraitist works by Dora Gordine (1895–1991). Along with the intriguing bronze and plaster shapes and curves, a couple of extra endearing asides are that the house is a portmanteau of Dora's name and that of her husband Richard, and the museum was actually their home.



## Out of Order

If you've been around Kingston and not noticed this unignorable art installation in Old London Road, it's time to remove your blinkers. The Out of Order artwork comprises a dozen old British telephone boxes frozen in falling as they topple onto each other like dominoes. The frozen motion will make you wonder if there's anyone inside any of them. We'll never know.

## Ancient Market

If you like eating and moseying at the same time any day of the week, this is the place to come to in Kingston. This historical market in Market Place dates way back to the 13th century. There are the usual suspects like hot dogs and burgers and some more exotic cooking like Vietnamese, Thai, Moroccan and French. It's good fun at Christmas, too.





# Things to do in Kingston upon Thames



## Riverside Walk

Stroll along the east side of the Thames opposite Hampton Court Park (also known as Home Park) on the west bank. Early morning is probably the best time for a quiet stroll as it can get a bit busy later with bicyclists and other walkers. There are lots of alfresco dining opportunities south of Kingston Bridge.

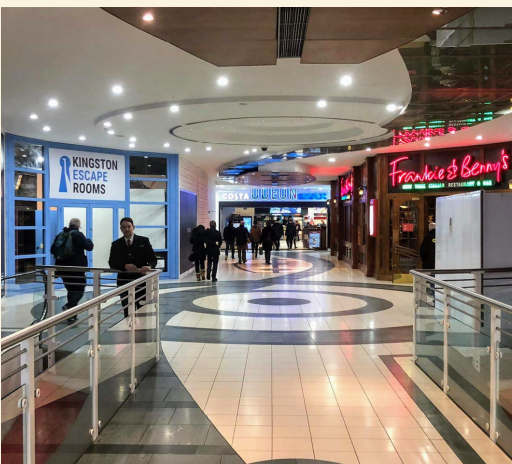
## Stanley Picker Gallery

There's always something intriguing at this gallery located on its little island on the Hogsmill River, next to the Kingston School of Art. The establishment is a creative community hub dedicated to contemporary art and design with exhibitions, events and activities. It's best to book before going.



## Surbiton Farmers' Market

Fine food is what this little market on Maple Road is all about. If you love gourmet game, bread, homemade preserves, cakes, olives, oysters, vegetables, pastries and pies, you're in the land of The Good Life (the 1970s TV sitcom was based in the area). The market is on every third Saturday of every month.



## Kingston Escape Rooms

When you fancy a change from all the gorgeous markets and shopping Kingston has to offer, why not get yourself incarcerated for a few giggles? You and your friends and family get 60 minutes to find a way out. Gluttons for punishment can currently choose from the following challenges: The Crazy Cat Lady, Rob the Bank, An Hour to Kill or Angie's Flower Shop.





# Top 3 Things to do With Children in Kingston upon Thames



## Kingston Gate Playground

This sweet little playground has been specially designed for children under five. It's a childish heaven of timber play sculptures with a fairy pergola and a tractor and trailer. There's multi-play equipment, a bark pit to mess about in, a hammock and little tables and seats. You'll find it next to Kingston Gate Car Park.



## David Lloyds Kids Club

Is your child a member of a sports club? They can be in Kingston. This club is dedicated to giving 5 to 11 year olds an opportunity to let off a lot of steam. On offer are sports, games, arts and crafts sessions, and swimming lessons. There's a special schedule during school holidays, with meals often included. For older children and young adults, there's also a Fitness into Teens (FIT) programme.



## Berrylands Nature Reserve

Get the children out in the fresh air and take them on a tramp through this sweet, tucked-away parklet and haven for wildlife. There's a deciduous wood, some scrubland, a bridge, a dipping pond and a stream called Tolworth Brook (also known as Surbiton Stream). Find it off Raeburn Avenue.



# Shopping and Leisure in Kingston upon Thames



## Shopping

Is Kingston a shoppers' paradise? Undoubtedly. One of the secrets to Kingston's shopping success is the high level of pedestrianisation in the town. Simply put, pedestrians find it pleasant. The jewels in the Kingston shopping crown are the Bentall Centre (about 75 shops) and the Bentalls Department Store (part of the Fenwick retail family). Other shopping hotspots include Eden Walk, High Street, Wood Street and Old London Road. The latter is home to many indie shops like The Antiques Centre, That Vintage Shop (mainly clothes) and Shak's Stax of Wax (mostly music). The town's big shops include Asda, Tesco, Sainsbury's and Waitrose. There are also a couple of popular, thriving markets.



## Restaurants

Where does one start! Kingston is a great place to indulge and bulge. For European cuisine, try Trattoria Calabrese, La Tasca, The Canbury Arms and The French Table. For cooking from beyond Europe, try Las Iguanas, Poor Boys and Narenj. For chicken, try Wingstop. For fish, Fish!

## Pubs and Nightclubs

Six of the best watering holes in and around Kingston are The Druid's Head on Market Place, The Fighting Cocks on Old London Road, Bacchus Late Bar on Union Street, The Gazebo on Riverside Walk, The Mill on High Street and The Queen's Head on Richmond Road.

## Cinema and Theatre

Kingston's blessed with a couple of good auditoriums – and that means more choice on what to watch, too! The delightful Rose Theatre, designed by Sir Peter Hall, is a great location to let your imagination go. It's a cool place, too, helping the local community with drama classes and nurturing emerging talent. The Rotunda Centre is a whopping building in the centre of Kingston that looks as if it's just landed from outer space. There's also an Odeon cinema.







# *Shopping and Leisure in Kingston upon Thames*



## **Gym and Health**

Keeping fit in Kingston is easy. When not strolling up and down the Thames, try The Gym Group in Eden Street, Nuffield Health Fitness & Wellbeing Gym off Richmond Road or David Lloyd in the Rotunda. And not far away is the Surbiton Racket & Fitness Club.



## **Golf Clubs**

The nearest golf clubs to Kingston are the 18-hole Hampton Court Palace Golf Club in Home Park, The Coombe Wood Golf Club on George Road and the Coombe Hill Golf Club on Golf Club Drive. A bit further afield is the old Surbiton Golf Club (established 1895).



## **Other Entertainment**

Tenpin in the Rotunda is your venue if you'd like to have a bowling match with friends. If you're into skateparks, you're spoilt for choice with at least three near Kingston. There's a skatepark in Home Park, the Tolworth Skatepark (fondly called 'Bowlworth' by fans) on Jubilee Way and Leatherhead Skatepark south of Kingston, on Kingston Road near the M25.





# Kingston upon Thames Travel Connections



Kingston is about 10 miles from Central London and well inside the M25 London orbital motorway about eight miles away. The main A3 road runs past the town, connecting London to Guildford and the South.



Kingston station has trains running into London Waterloo every 15 minutes at peak times, the trip taking about half an hour.



There are many bus routes through Kingston with over 30 routes running to Ealing, Putney and Hounslow amongst other destinations and further afield to Epsom and Guildford. River buses are another option with services between Kingston and several stations in the capital, including Canary Wharf and London Bridge.



The nearest airport is London Gatwick, less than an hour's drive away.

"Shrovetide football, with boarded-up windows and the town as the pitch, was last played in Kingston in 1866."



We first used Coombe Residential 20 years ago to purchase our house in Coombe and again recently to sell. Each time we found Hani's local knowledge to be exceptional and out of the 4 estate agents we had dealings with, Coombe Residential were by far the most interested and consistently responsive. We would have no hesitation in recommending Coombe Residential. E.T

Selling and buying, then actually moving home can be a major challenge for any family, and we were no exception. However, having Coombe Residential in our corner made a hugely positive difference for us. They were agents on our sale, which they did supremely well, providing useful context about each viewer which eased the negotiation when we came to it. They were also fantastic in other ways, going beyond their remit to help us navigate challenges on our purchase and find a solicitor and removals firms from which we enjoyed excellent services. Thank you Coombe Residential! E.P

Hani and his team made the overall buying experience extremely smooth. Hani has extensive knowledge of his clients and the local area and it is clear to see he has built these relationships over many years. This really adds value to the process. S.A

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