

Bricks & Mortar

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Do you live in a
golden postcode?

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Home of the week

This new Chelsea townhouse could be the priciest on sale this year. By Carol Lewis

It's not every day that a trophy home in a trophy development comes to market, but 2 Whistler Square is just that. A seven-bedroom, 15,000 sq ft townhouse with a separate one-bedroom mews house in Chelsea Barracks — between Sloane Square and the River Thames. Such a home was never going to be cheap, but the £58 million price tag will make it the most expensive on the 12.8-acre site, and quite probably the top sale in prime central London so far this year.

Chelsea's former army barracks has had a chequered history. The original design proposed by the Candy brothers after they bought it with the Qatari royal family in 2007 was abandoned after Prince Charles labelled it "awful". It was redesigned and completed by Qatari Diar, a property company established by Qatar's sovereign fund.

It markets itself as "London's most coveted neighbourhood" and has been known to confidently set up its marketing stall at the Black Bears polo club, near Henley-on-Thames, where tournaments are frequented by royalty and aristocracy. And when it says that a property comes with five-star amenities, it means it: there may not be stabling for your polo pony but 2 Whistler Square has a 12m swimming pool, a sauna and steam rooms, gym, spa treatment room, eight-seat cinema, wine cellar, separate resident and service lifts, a large roof terrace, landscaped garden and garage for two cars.

The newly built, six-storey, 10m wide townhouse has 3.4m-high rooms, all

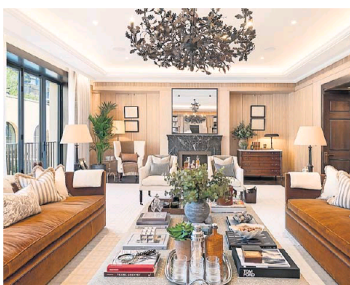
designed by Albion Nord — the price includes furnishings. Ottalie Stride, creative director of the interior design studio, says: "The colour inspiration was drawn from the restrained palettes seen in the Georgian era, and the house's immediate local surroundings and the extensive green garden spaces."

The architect Squire & Partners has designed the homes around a series of public gardens in much the same way as the historical Belgravia squares near by. The townhouses on Whistler Square, tucked back from Pimlico Road at the northern end of the development, overlook a water feature, while neighbouring Mulberry Square — in a nod to the nearby Chelsea Physic Garden — is designed around a "culinary garden" (a posh vegetable patch).

The only building from when the barracks was built in 1861, the grade II listed Garrison chapel, is now a gallery and meeting space, and the centre of a "village square" with "a new restaurant concept and high-end retailer" promised. The square is home to the Garrison Club, the residents' space, with a spa, 16-seat cinema, billiards room, concierge and business suite — accessible for the residents of 2 Whistler Square by an underground route to preserve their privacy.

Two-bedroom apartments at the barracks start at £525 million, and townhouses from £38 million, prices that put owning beyond the reach of most. However, when the scheme is finished in 2026 it will have 448 homes, 126 of which will be affordable. chelseabarracks.com

£58 million



SW1W The postcode in number

In this part of London 19% of properties for sale are under offer, falling to 10% of those costing £10 million or more

33% Increase in buyer demand in the past year

£2,390,000 is the average house price

TAKING THE TEMPERATURE BUYERS' MARKET

The hotter the market, the quicker and easier it should be to sell a home



What £450,000 buys you in ...

Compiled by Victoria Brzezinski and Malcolm Jack
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Perthshire

This beautiful old five-bedroom country house charms at first sight, standing tall in the lush green countryside, down a long private drive just off the narrow Kirton of Mailer Road where it winds westwards through Perthshire farmlands adjacent to the River Earn. There are views from practically every window in a house that — despite requiring modernisation (unless a lime green 1970s bathroom suite is to your liking) — has been looked after and upgraded to a high standard inside and out. Central Perth is ten minutes away.

Air pollution 6.2 mcg/m³ particulate pollution annual average, 1.2 mcg/m³ above the WHO guideline of 5mcg/m³. **Upside** Private setting in rolling Perthshire countryside.

Downside Close to a motorway junction and railway tracks.

Contact simpleapproach.co.uk

Offers over £444,950



London TW19

This one-bedroom pied-à-terre is on the first floor of a pretty period building on Old Palace Lane, a tree-lined street that leads from Richmond Green down to a scenic stretch of the Thames. One of eight flats in the building, the apartment extends to 348 sq ft, which includes a renovated bathroom (with enough room for a tub), a light-filled kitchen and a separate reception room with a large sash window. There are 115 years left on the lease and an annual service charge of £665, including ground rent. Richmond station is a seven-minute stroll away for the District line.

Air pollution 14.1mcg/m³, 9.1mcg/m³ above the WHO guideline of 5mcg/m³. **Upside** Chain-free, plus lovely views over Old Deer Park.

Downside It's tiny and there are no windows in the bathroom.

Contact propertypartnership.london

£450,000





Brief encounter

Ask the expert

Q I have a rental property and the tenants are behind with their rent. If I issued court proceedings, will I get my legal costs back?

A Where a tenant with a conventional assured shorthold tenancy agreement is behind with rent, the landlord can generally serve a notice seeking possession and issue court proceedings. The usual "rent grounds" for possession are set out in grounds 8, 10 or 11 of Schedule 2 of the Housing Act 1988.

Assuming a judge orders possession, the landlord will also ask for a costs order under the court's Civil Procedure Rules. The rules provide that an unsuccessful party will generally pay the costs of the successful party — and if a landlord obtains a court possession order the tenant is almost invariably treated as the "unsuccessful party".

The amount of costs a court can award is subject to complex rules, and it should be borne in mind that a judge always has a wide area of discretion. Most residential possession claims in the county court are not defended by the tenant and such cases are covered by the fixed costs regime in rule 45 of the Civil Procedure Rules. The landlord is limited to recovering fixed legal expenses for issuing proceedings (usually £355), commencement (£69.50) and the judgment hearing (£57.25); but a landlord is entitled to higher figures if the case is defended or if there is an "indemnity costs" provision in the tenancy

agreement. In particular, indemnity costs provisions are quite common in assured shorthold agreements, typically requiring the tenant to pay or indemnify all the landlord's legal costs of taking proceedings. The courts must generally give effect to such a provision, and their power to deduct anything from the landlord legal costs bill is very limited indeed.

It follows that if you take proceedings against the tenant, your ability to recover legal costs will probably be limited by the court's procedure rules, unless the tenancy agreement includes a specific indemnity costs provision.

Mark Loveday is a barrister with Tanfield Chambers. Email your question to brief_encounter@thetimes.co.uk



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Gloucestershire

Priory Cottage is an adorable two-bedroom country escape in Brimsfield, a rural parish about seven miles south of Cheltenham. The honeystone house has been decorated in smart neutral tones and is set behind a picket gate within a Cotswold stone wall. It comprises 538 sq ft of accommodation: the front door opens into the kitchen/dining room and leads to a reception room with a stone fireplace housing a wood-burner.

Upstairs the two partly vaulted bedrooms have gorgeous countryside views and painted tongue-and-groove panelling. The principal bedroom has a cast-iron fireplace.

Air pollution 8.1mcg/m³, 3.1mcg/m³ above the WHO guideline of 5mcg/m³.

Upside Gigaclear superfast broadband and south-facing gardens.

Downside Private septic tank drainage. **Contact** bultersherborn.co.uk



£420,000

Nouvelle-Aquitaine, France

Les Eyzies-de-Tayac-Sireuil is a picturesque part of the Dordogne, famous for Unesco-recognised sites with brilliantly preserved prehistoric cave paintings. Set in 1.8 acres, this stone three-bedroom house is about a mile from Les Eyzies town centre and has two separate two-bedroom gîtes — ideal for running a holiday letting business — as well as outbuildings, an outdoor pool and river access. The main house has an open-plan living/dining room and kitchen with a wood-burning stove, laundry room, bathroom, plus a separate reception room and another large room that could be used as a fourth bedroom. Bergerac airport is about 35 miles away.

Upside You get a lot for your money. **Downside** Oil-fired heating.

Contact hamptons-international.com



€527,880