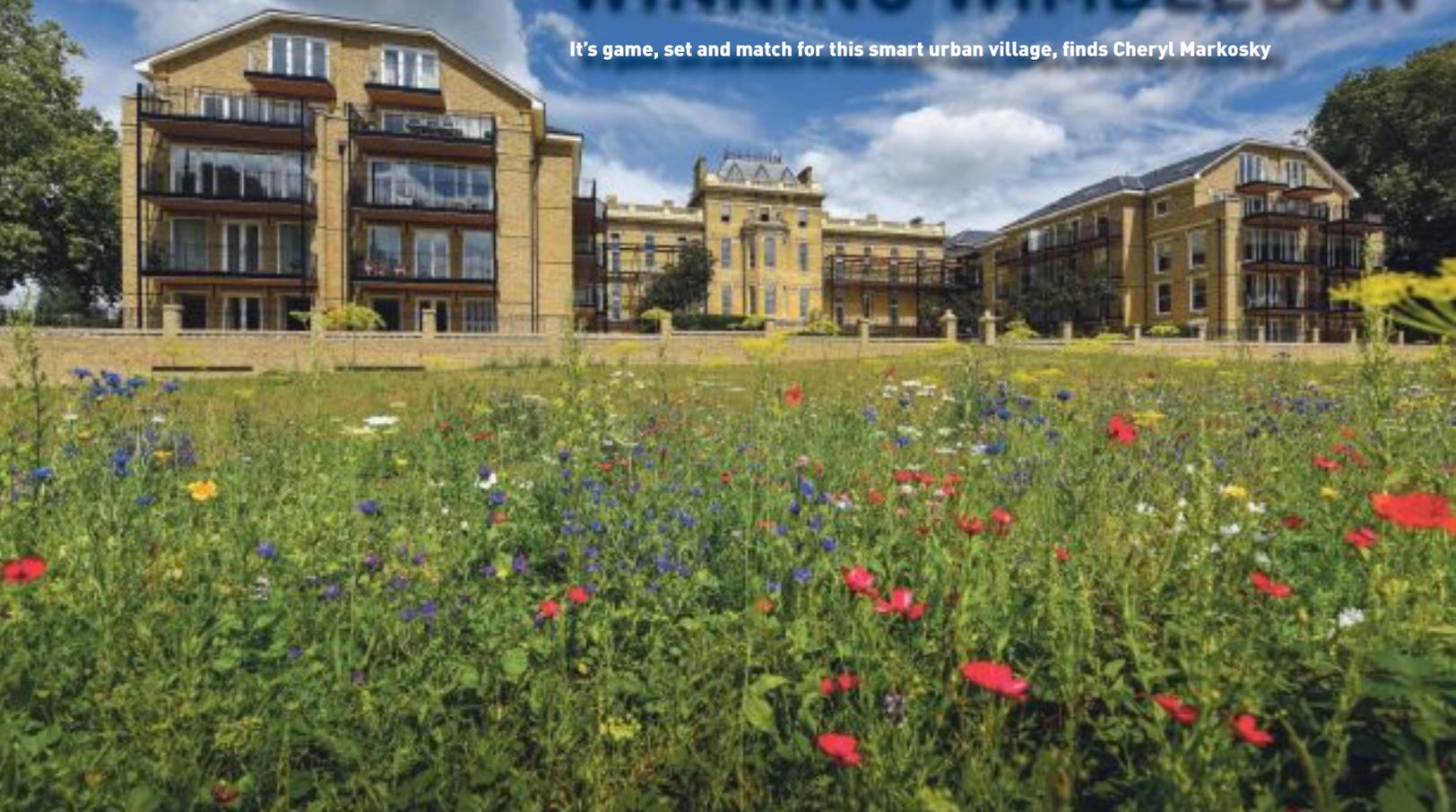


# WINNING WIMBLEDON

It's game, set and match for this smart urban village, finds Cheryl Markosky



Anyone for tennis? Fans of the world-famous Wimbledon Championships, held from July 2-15 at the All England Lawn Tennis Club, regard SW19 as the British home of the sport.

They're correct, of course, but there's more to Wimbledon than watching stars like Rafa Nadal, Roger Federer and Serena Williams slug it out on court, points out Guy Meacock, director of buying agency Prime Purchase.

"Wimbledon is highly desirable for families seeking that balance of town and country, with larger houses and more generous gardens than can be found centrally," he says.

As much of the architecture's late Victorian or Edwardian, Guy explains that you find wider footprints and are not living over multiple floors as you might in the heart of the capital.

Wimbledon became one of London's "superburbs" in the 17th century, when wealthy families moved to the village due to its proximity to the city core, suggests Aneisha Beveridge, housing analyst at Hamptons International.

"Today, very little has changed, with 84% of Wimbledon buyers moving here from other parts of prime London," she notes.

As well as first-class tennis and good house design, Aneisha thinks the heathland of Wimbledon Common, and artful blend of chic shops, cafes and bars on Wimbledon Village High Street, adds to its metro-meets-rural allure.

Like the tennis championships that date back 140 years, Wimbledon is well established. Kinleigh Folkard & Hayward's Lucy Barnes argues that it's a safe bet: a solid area that won't drastically change.

Attracting an array of buyers – from first-timers to returning downsizers – Wimbledon's a long-term prospect, adds Lucy. "Families come because of the schools and end up in their 'forever' houses."

You don't need to win the Championships' £2.2 million top prize to get on the property ladder either. You can pick up a one-bedroom flat from £350,000, says John D Wood & Co's Warren Appleton.

Going upwards, a two-bed cottage in Wimbledon Town costs £800,000, and "a family can purchase a four-bedroom terrace in good condition for £1.3 million," he observes.

However, to be the proud owner of a smart villa on Parkside next to the Common, you'd need to be victorious on Centre Court nearly 10 times to have enough cash for such a prestigious dwelling.

Dominic Pasqua, head of Knight Frank Wimbledon, reckons there's no better time to buy, as Wimbledon prices are down about 1.5% this year (and 15% since higher stamp duty rates kicked in two years ago).

"The market's exceptionally price sensitive," he remarks, "but homes valued sensibly are selling." They're particularly tempting for upper-end buyers from Fulham, Chelsea and Notting Hill.

Dominic's also witnessing exiles from London, who ventured "too far down the A3", wending their way back to SW19.

A number are interested in new, luxe projects, such as Berkeley Homes' Wimbledon Hill Park, where chic apartments in the latest phase range from £950,000-£2.5 million.

Nino Boehm, sales manager at Wimbledon Hill Park, says: "The development's well located – only a five-minute drive to the Village – and residents benefit from a gym, cinema, meeting room and concierge service."

Downsizers searching for smaller, stylish properties might find it a bit challenging at present, as homes near the Village tend to be bigger and some sellers have removed their petite houses from the market.



## WIMBLEDON HILL PARK SW20

FROM £950,000

Berkeley Homes' apartments in grounds that were once part of the Duke of Wellington's residence, and overlooking 19 acres of protected parkland.

[www.wimbledonhillpark.co.uk](http://www.wimbledonhillpark.co.uk)



## WALNUT TREE COTTAGES, CHURCH ROAD SW19

£1,295,000

Three-bed period cottage on a gated mews in the heart of the Village and close to the popular Dog & Fox pub.

[www.robertholmes.co.uk](http://www.robertholmes.co.uk)



## EAGLE HOUSE, HIGH STREET W19

FROM £2,750,000

Old-meets-new in eight luxe flats by Octagon Developments, with restored fireplaces and oak panelling alongside modern Bulthaup kitchens with Miele appliances.

[www.octagon.co.uk](http://www.octagon.co.uk)



**MONTEM TERRACE,  
ARTERBURY ROAD SW20**  
FROM £4,250,000

Select row of four new houses, with five bedrooms and five bathrooms, available currently on a quiet Wimbledon street.  
[www.robertholmes.co.uk](http://www.robertholmes.co.uk)



**FLORENCE ROAD SW19**  
£925,000

Fully extended, period house with three bedrooms and double reception room, in popular South Park Gardens.  
[www.kfh.co.uk](http://www.kfh.co.uk)



**POSSIL HOUSE,  
COPSE HILL SW20**  
£2,450,000

Victorian family house with five bedrooms, impressive high ceilings, off-street parking and garage.  
[www.savills.com](http://www.savills.com)



**MELBURY GARDENS SW20**  
£1,800,000

Four-bed, two-bath semi with front and rear gardens, and potential to extend into the loft.  
[www.johndwood.co.uk](http://www.johndwood.co.uk)

"Vendors are waiting until the market turns before they put their properties back up for sale. As these homes are now in short supply, prices stay high," explains James Morrison of Savills.

Yet, you're still likely to get better value in Wimbledon compared to other London zones.

According to Savills Research, the average price per square foot in prime Wimbledon is £750, opposed to £800 in prime south-west London and £1,200 in central London.

There are also fewer investors in Wimbledon than in the rest of the capital, believes John Nouri at Robert Holmes & Company.

He says: "Property isn't seen purely for investment. This is where people want to educate their children and enjoy their lives."

John is discovering that Chinese and Russian buyers – "who don't want the hustle and bustle of central London" – are selling their central London flats so they can buy 'country' houses in the fresh air of Wimbledon.

They might want to check out Montem Terrace, a top-end clutch of seven, new-build houses on a quiet street in Wimbledon Village, each with five bedrooms, cinema room, gym and spacious garden.

There will be only 21 homes in total on-site, with prices from £4.25 million. John reckons that Montem's "laidback" vibe will appeal particularly to city escapees.

Another opportunity for all-comers wanting character blended with what's modish is Octagon Developments' Eagle House – seven luxury apartments in a Grade II\*-listed building, priced from £2.75 million.

Octagon's Andy Cook says the homes "incorporate much of the splendour of the Jacobean building, while including all 'mod cons' for today's lifestyles."

Old, new, town and country – it's easy to see why Wimbledon is so high in the rankings. A worthy champion on and off the court. 🏡

## FACT FILE

### What's special...

Waitrose (two branches), The Ivy Café, Light House, Cau Steak, San Lorenzo and Buenos Aires restaurants; Centre Court Shopping, Elys of Wimbledon, Bayley & Sage gourmet groceries, Wimbledon Books, New Wimbledon Theatre, Joseph, Question Air designer clothing, Caroline Randell lingerie boutique, and The Wardrobe Wimbledon for men's clothing.

### What's new...

Wimbledon Hill Park (Berkeley Homes), Stadia Three (Galliard Homes), Cambium (Lendlease), Montem Terrace (Coronado) and Eagle House (Octagon Developments).

### Schools...

Bishop Gilpin Church of England Primary, West Park Primary, The Rowans, The Norwegian School, The Study Preparatory, King's College, Wimbledon High, Kingston University and Wimbledon College of Arts.

### Celebrities...

Darcey Bussell, Boris Becker, Michael McIntyre, Andy Hamilton and Jamie T.

### Open spaces...

Wimbledon Common and Cannizaro Park.

### Connections...

Wimbledon Tube (District line), South Wimbledon Tube (Northern line), Southfields Tube (District line), Wimbledon Overground to Waterloo in 17 minutes, A3 into the City or heading west to Portsmouth. Crossrail 2 – which will reduce crowding and journey times to London, Hertfordshire and Surrey – is proposed.

### Property prices...

Zoopla average value £853,718.