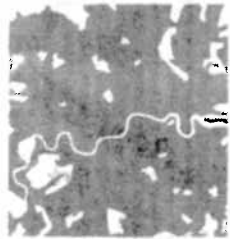




In 2002 a local artist made and sold 1,000 sticks of Peckham rock to raise money to help regenerate the area

wouldn't love it here



Do you know?
Frank's Café is a pop-up summer restaurant on top of a multi-storey car park

Convenience is just one of the factors attracting buyers in their droves. Peckham is very close to central London and has become very cool – even more so than Camberwell,’ says Luke Wooster, owner of estate agents Wooster & Stock.

‘It’s changed a lot over the past five years and there’s a vibrant arts scene but it’s somewhere you need to get to know a little to appreciate it fully. And there’s good housing stock, with lots of decent-sized Victorian terraces.’

Larger, attractive period houses can be found in Lyndhurst Way and Peckham Rye, overlooking the green space of Peckham Rye Park, but the area’s most picturesque dwellings are also its smallest. These are in Choumert Square – a lane, rather than a square, of tiny one-person cottages that look like they’ve leapt from the pages of a child’s storybook. Each has its own miniature, tented plot leading to a communal garden.



Dubious: Peckham has spent years trying to distance itself from the legacy of comedy *Only Fools And Horses*

Wooster says: ‘Many buyers work in the media or arts, and move from west and north London as they realise they can get so much more for their money here. They stay once they’ve discovered it.’

‘One-bedroom flats cost from £150,000 to £220,000, two-beds from £200,000 to £300,000, three-bedroom terraced houses from £450,000 to £600,000 and four or five-bed houses go from £700,000 to well over £1million.’

Although house prices are signif-

cantly lower than in more established Balham and Blackheath, they’ve shot up over the past 18 months. ‘A property valued then at £325,000 to £350,000 would be about £430,000 today,’ says Colin Lowman of estate agent Roy Brooks. ‘Prices have gone up by 15 to 20 per cent in that time.’

Demand for homes to rent shows no sign of slowing down, either. ‘Our tenants are working people – couples and sharers – and business is good for buy-to-let landlords,’

says Anita Barry of Kinleigh, Folkard & Hayward’s lettings team.

‘Several developers have converted former pubs into flats for rental rather than sale. Income has increased by five per cent year on year, and one-bedroom flats fetch £750 to £900 per month, two-beds £1,100 to £1,200, and three-bedroom houses £1,500 to £1,600.’

‘Sometimes we scarcely have time to get the carpets cleaned before the next people move in.’

Next week Metro moves to Pimlico

Property Hunter

By Jo Eccles of Sourcing Property



According to recently released figures, there are 160,000 tenants subletting their council homes for up to £1,000 per week.

The astonishing fact to add is that it is not currently a criminal offence to sublet a council home, despite this effectively being fraud against taxpayers who are subsidising the council rent for council tenants.

Hopefully, this is now all about to change as the government has pledged £19million to back a national crackdown. In addition, housing minister Grant Shapps is expected to launch a consultation process with new legislation planned to follow that will criminalise subletting.

It’s great news that the government is addressing this but it does need to ensure that punishments are strong enough and it is policed effectively.

Many of the council tenants subletting their homes have moved into alternative private accommodation and currently the punishment is the confiscation of the council home they’re subletting. Given that they are likely to have moved out already, this doesn’t appear enough of a deterrent. I believe heavy fines and imprisonment need to be included as part of the repercussions, as well as a reduction in the overall benefits received by the offenders.

Another way to monitor this abuse is closer supervision of who is occupying the limited supply of housing. There are approximately 6,000 social housing tenants who have an annual household income of £100,000 or more – how they have been given council houses in the first place, and then been allowed to remain in, them is incredulous. With approximately 1.8million families on council house waiting lists, the government needs to ensure that those occupying council houses are genuine cases.

Abuse and fraud within the council and housing association sectors cost taxpayers between £5billion and £10billion per year. I congratulate the government for finally clamping down on abuse.

There are about 6,000 social housing tenants with an income of £100,000 or more

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Arty: Statues by Antony Gormley and Zandra Rhodes add colour to Peckham's conservation area

Band	Property value (1991)	Tax
Band A	Up to £40,000	£ 814.64
Band B	£40,001-52,000	£950.41
Band C	£52,001-£68,000	£1,086.19
Band D	£68,001-88,000	£1,221.96
Band E	£88,001-120,000	£1,493.51
Band F	£120,001-160,000	£1,765.06
Band G	£160,001-320,000	£2,096.60
Band H	More than £320,001	£2,443.92

Source: www.southwark.gov.uk



Only a plonker

SOMETIMES the borders between fact and fiction become so blurred it's difficult to work out what's real and what's not – and Peckham is a case in point. It shot to fame in the early 1980s as home to Del Boy and Rodney Trotter in classic BBC sitcom *Only Fools and Horses* – though in reality the high-rise block featured in the series was in Acton, not SE15.

The area has spent the past couple of decades trying to distance itself from the Trotters' dubious legacy and to a large extent has succeeded. In common with virtually every urban neighbourhood, there are spots where you wouldn't want to venture after dark and in places it's rather rough around the edges – but overall this vibrant, multicultural area has plenty of charm and a real sense of community.

It's been through something of a metamorphosis and is now hardly recognisable from 20 years ago. In 1994 Southwark council was

PECKHAM: THIS WEEK METRO MOVES SOUTH-EAST TO A LIVELY AREA THAT REALLY DOESN'T SUFFER FOOLS
BY ANDREA DEAN

awarded a £60million grant at the launch of an extensive regeneration scheme, which became the largest of its kind in Europe.

The project included demolishing five housing estates – among them notorious North Peckham estate – and replacing them with modern, lower density social housing. Belenden Road – once a jumble of run-down Victorian and Georgian houses – has undergone a major revamp and its adopted name of Belenden Village is testament to its newly gentrified status. Along with a mix of trendy, independent

bars, cafés and shops you can't fail to miss the eye-catching bollards and other street furniture, created by sculptor Antony Gormley and designer Zandra Rhodes.

There must be something in the air as Peckham is a hotbed of artistic talent, with countless galleries and studios. Even the library is a work of art – clad in copper and mounted on stilts, it has won several awards including the prestigious Stirling Prize for architectural excellence in 2000.

It is set back from Peckham High Street, part of the newly designated conservation area containing a number of historic buildings. One of these is grade II-listed Peckham Rye station, with an impressive vaulted old waiting room that's currently being restored. The station is fully operational with frequent and fast trains taking under ten minutes to reach London Bridge and less than 15 to Victoria. Peckham Rye is in Zone 2 and an annual Travelcard into Zone 1 costs £1,168.

THEN and NOW Peckham
An excellent place for Property Investment

Roy Brooks

THEN....

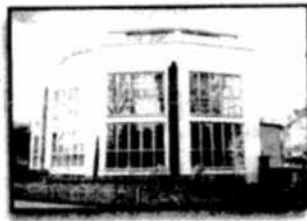
£3,995 FREEHOLD. ANTIQUARIAN PROUDLY OFFERS his ghastly Peckham house. Almost innocent of plumbing, no bathroom – bodily ablutions confined to a couple of sinks & the canal at the bottom of the garden. 8 fair sized rooms. As the artists have already moved into Peckham it is only a matter of time before they are followed by the fringe professions, Stage, Telly and Advertising – with the Chelsea type of moaned intellectual snob breathing on their necks – then a dump like this will be worth well over £10,000. MOVE QUICKLY.



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