

# In and around... Primrose Hill The view from the Hill

We hear about the type of people who live there and why it's so popular with people 'in the know'. **Natasha Higgins** visited the area, climbed the hill and gives us her view.

At 256 ft above sea level, a panoramic view of London awaits. Across the skyline, some of the capital's most celebrated landmarks such as the London Eye, The Shard and The Gherkin can be seen. The short up-hill walk to the summit of Primrose Hill is definitely worth it.

As any Londoner will tell you, neighbourhoods don't come much more fashionable than NW3. Primrose Hill, named after a meadow where Primrose flowers once grew, is home to many an actor, film director, supermodel, fashion designer, writer and artist. A bit fancier than Camden yet edgier than St John's Wood, it lies somewhere between the two while being adjacent to Regent's Park.

Edward Prickett, Associate Director at **John D Wood & Co**, says Primrose Hill became really fashionable at the beginning of the 21st century, "but it's always been popular with people 'in the know'".

Former hunting grounds appropriated by Henry VIII, Primrose Hill was owned by Eton College until the 1990s and turned into a public park in 1842.

In terms of cafes, restaurants and entertainment, the area has plenty to offer. Its main strip lies along Regent's Park Road where quirky shops, breakfast haunts such as **Cafe Seventy Nine**, which serves delicious



Viewfinder: The majestic view of London from atop Primrose Hill

vegetarian food, **Anthony's Delicatessen**, and Russian restaurant **Trojka** for example, line the pavements creating a relaxed social vibe.

"The **Mary Portas living & giving shop** on Regent's Park Road is great," says Simon Halliday, Sales Manager at **Sandfords**. He continues: "The shopping street on Regent's Park Road is a true gem too because of all the different types of shops: shoe shops, a handmade underwear shop, a bookshop, a wonderful selection of what I would call curiosity shops, one-off shops and health food shops".

Predictably, perspective buyers in the area tend to be "cool people", states Halliday. "Come visit for brunch on a sunny midweek morning and you'll find out who lives here. Or, ask the paparazzi who stalk them on their motor scooters!"

Halliday is of course referring to the likes of actors Jude Law, Rhys Ifans and Ewan McGregor who live here and form part of Primrose Hill's notorious 'set'.

**So far, so good?** Here Prickett gives a few pointers for the best streets and squares in the area: "Proper Primrose Hill Village is the semi-circular selection of roads within Regent's Park Road and Gloucester Avenue – the most sought after of which are Chalcot Crescent,



Hustle & bustle: With its cafes, restaurants and entertainment, Primrose Hill has plenty to offer



New kid on the block: The Mary Portas living & giving shop

Rothwell Street, Chalcot Square and Regent's Park Road itself."

Halliday believes the area only has highly-desirable streets and that it's the budget that defines where you live: "Chalcot Square has the prestige but now Regent's Park Road has the proportions and scale. St Georges Terrace has the views or if you want quaint, then Chalcot Crescent, Rothwell Street and Chamberlain Street are your best bet." He adds that there is something for all taste and style and in recent years, ultra-modern properties with control panels, disappearing swimming pools, garages with lifts, perspex lap pools, modular bedrooms – all clean, white and clinical – have set the trend.

Architecturally the area is dominated by Georgian and both early and late-Victorian terraced houses and the average price depends on location. "In Chalcot Square we have recently agreed a triplex for £1,750 per square foot. Houses in the village tend to go for between £1,100 and £1,400 per square foot and flats generally between £900 and £1,200," says Prickett.

**Up and coming areas nearby?** "I still rate parts of Primrose Village such as Ainger Road and Oppidans Road as they are less expensive and offer good

**GET BOOKING**

**Cafe Seventy Nine** 020 7586 8012

**Anthony's Delicatessen** 020 7722 9246

**Trojka** trojka.co.uk 020 7483 3765

**Mary Portas living & giving shop**  
maryportas.com/livingandgiving 020 7586 9966

**LOCAL ESTATE AGENTS**

**John D Wood & Co** 020 7586 9060 johndwood.co.uk

**Olivers Town** 020 7722 5054 oliverstown.com

**Sandfords** 020 7722 7997 sandfords.com

width – they are semi-detached properties rather than Victorian terraced. Specific properties such as Darwin Court and Hill View are surprisingly cheap compared to period property within the same location".

Although Primrose Hill itself no longer has up and coming pockets, Halliday deems "Albert Street, Delancy Street and Kentish Town, South End Green and parts of Belsize Park as being good value".

It is easy to see why this quaint village in the centre of London appeals to so many and will remain so for years to come. Here, Paul Brooke, Director at **Olivers Town**, concludes by giving us a poetical account of this central London gem:

"Primrose Hill, above all, speaks of wind and trees; of dogs and their masters and mistresses; of summer violins, cellos and oboes coming from the wandering musicians that inhabit Regent's Park Road. Of picnics and quarrels. Of playing children and

dramatic views. The streets speak of fashion; of rosemary bread and cake shops. The well healed continuing their battle between left and right and Freud vs Jung. The streets, timeless and permanent, but no particular one is more desirable than another. After all, Primrose Hill – Chalcot Square overlooking the gardens; St Mark's Square backing onto Regent's Canal; St Georges Terrace; Chalcot Crescent – is a perfectly formed village, complete with village green; the hill itself".



St Marks Crescent, NW1 £2,950,000  
Sandfords 020 7722 7997

A handsome and double fronted, semi-detached, period house located on a quiet and highly sought-after street. The property is arranged over four floors and benefits from numerous period features but is in need of total renovation and offers an excellent opportunity to create a unique and bespoke home with private gardens and a detached garage.

Fitzroy Road, NW1 Price on Application  
John D Wood & Co 020 7586 9060

Positioned in the heart of Primrose Hill Village this very attractive period terraced house is set over five floors and is presented in excellent condition with very good natural light throughout. There are five bedrooms, three bathrooms, three reception rooms, a kitchen/breakfast room, conservatory, a rear garden and a roof terrace with delightful views.



Variety is the spice of life: From quaint bookshops and pet shops, to Russian tea rooms (right)

