

ALL MAPPED OUT

Rule No 1 for first-time buyers: know the Tube network, says **Tom Lewis**

LONDON'S 12 Tube lines are the veins of the capital's property map – and a good starting point for first-time buyers searching for an affordable home. Properties along the Central line, which covers the core central London area, top the Tube line price chart, but not all of the cheapest locations are at the end of a line.

Far from it. Aldgate and Elephant & Castle, in travel Zone 1, and Whitechapel, Oval and New Cross in Zone 2, stand out as affordable, up-and-coming areas. Tooting (Northern line) and Tottenham Hale (Victoria line) are also worth looking at.

One Tube network quirk is that the only line that goes deep into south London is called the Northern line. It is heavily used by young Londoners because it connects cheaper locations both north and south of the river with the main employment centres of the West End and City.

As a rule of thumb, properties north of the river are more expensive than those on the south side, though there are some mid-range areas – such as Clapham and Camden – that are comparable in price terms. Kennington



On the waterfront: Kingsland Basin, Hackney, with 207 homes converted from two listed warehouses. Call 0844 406 9800



From £227,000: studios and flats by Bellway at The Water Tower in Renfrew Road, Lambeth. Call 020 7735 9422



From £185,000: flats at The Quadrant, Stockwell, which has 271 new homes. For information, call 020 8357 4444

London's Tube map is a good starting point – but not all of the cheapest locations are at the end of a line

(in Zone 2) is where the Northern line splits – one branch goes to Bank and the other to Charing Cross.

The area is the first place you hit on the south side of the river when travelling from Westminster. In fact, so close is the area to the seat of government that parts of it fall within the Commons' Division Bell boundary. Yet, MPs aside, Kennington is ignored by many buyers.

Redevelopment of former Lambeth Hospital has brought affordable homes to the market. The scheme in Renfrew Road is tucked away in a quiet corner, moments from pretty Georgian squares. The location also borders the Elephant & Castle regeneration zone, meaning that neighbourhood improvements are on the horizon.

Called **The Water Tower**, the development takes its name from a seven-storey structure at the centre of the site.

Bellway is building studios and one- and two-bedroom apartments priced from £227,000 to £350,000 – decent value for money in a well-connected area. Call 020 7735 9422.

Kennington Tube station will become a more strategic transport link if regeneration plans for Nine Elms in Battersea come to fruition. A spur of the Northern line is planned, with a new station at the Battersea Power Station site and

another at Wandsworth Road. No-frills Oval, the next Tube stop along from Kennington, has struggled to have an identity beyond its famous cricket ground. Yet landmarks such as Big Ben and the Eye break the skyline, reminding locals that they truly live in the heart of London. Several new developments have put it on the homebuyers' map.

Redevelopment of a printworks in **Clapham Road** has brought a much-

needed scheme of scale and style. This four-acre site has 152 homes – apartments and modern-design town houses – plus there will be bars and restaurants around a new public square. Prices from £295,000. Completion is due later this year. Call Galliard Homes on 020 7620 1500.

Stockwell, still quite central, is a slightly unsung location on the Northern line. It has a decent stock of

period housing alongside tough council estates. Big new schemes are rare, which makes **The Quadrant**, a former brewery, stand out. There are 271 new homes, with prices starting at £185,000 (full market price). Call developer Notting Hill Home Ownership on 020 8357 4444 or email sales@nhhg.org.uk.

The extended East London line through Hackney is an enticement for homebuyers. Parts of the borough are still relatively cheap. London and Quadrant housing association is redeveloping the **Haggerston West** and **Kingsland** estates, located either side of the Regent's Canal, meaning there will be new waterfront homes, with the first becoming available next year. To register, visit lqgroup.org.uk, or call 0844 406 9800. The site is close to the new Haggerston station on the East London line.

At nearby **Kingsland Basin**, L&Q is building 207 homes, a health centre, café, shops and workspace. Two listed warehouses are being converted.

Tottenham is one of London's cheapest areas, according to estate agent Winkworth, which has a network of branches across the capital. Studios cost from under £100,000, and a decent

In Tottenham studios cost from under £100,000 and a three-bedroom Victorian house is less than £300,000

three-bedroom Victorian house is less than £300,000. Forty per cent of local purchasers are first-time buyers. Tottenham Hale station is on the Victoria line and is also a major junction on the Liverpool Street to Stansted route.

Hale Village, next to the station, is Haringey borough's biggest development project since the Sixties – a £400 million scheme that includes 1,200 new homes, a student campus for University of the Arts, hotel, retail and office space.

The developer is Lee Valley Estates but nearly half (542) of the new homes will be provided by Newlon, and they are expected to be popular with young Londoners priced out of Islington, Camden and Shoreditch. To register, call 0800 058 2544, or go to sales@newlon.org.uk.



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