

landfall

LANDFALL LONDON · AREA GUIDE

Living in Kensington & Chelsea

Stucco terraces, garden squares and free museums on your doorstep, at the very top of the London market.

AVERAGE HOME PRICE

£1,204,000

Kensington and Chelsea, Aug 2026. London: £554,000

AVERAGE RENT

£3,739 a month

Highest in the UK, Sep 2026. London: £2,338

COUNCIL TAX (BAND D)

£1,667 a year

2026/27. England average: £2,392

TO HEATHROW

Under an hour

Piccadilly line, or Heathrow Express from Paddington

Cover photo: Loris Boulinguez / Unsplash

The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea is the London many Americans picture: white stucco terraces, private garden squares, the museums of South Kensington and the pastel houses of Notting Hill. It has long been popular with international families and people on corporate relocations.

It is the most expensive place in the UK to buy or rent. Most people live in flats in converted townhouses or mansion blocks, and a house with a garden takes a serious budget. In return you get Hyde Park, short commutes to the West End and the City, and a very international community.

GOOD FOR

- Short commutes to the West End and the City
- Families who want to walk to school and the park
- Corporate relocations with a housing allowance
- Museums, restaurants and city living

PROPERTY

Buying and renting

The average home in Kensington and Chelsea sold for about £1.2 million in August 2026, more than twice the London average of £554,000. Prices fell by around 14% over the year, mostly because flat prices dropped, which can give buyers more room to negotiate.

Most homes are flats in converted Victorian townhouses or red-brick mansion blocks, and almost all are leasehold, with service charges. Check how many years are left on the lease, what the service charge covers and whether major works are planned before you make an offer. Our England buying guide explains offers, surveys and exchange.

Renting is the usual first step, and corporate tenants are common here. Average rents were about £3,739 a month in September 2026, the highest of any area in the UK. Since May 2026, private tenancies in England roll on with no fixed term, and you can leave with two months' notice.

BEFORE YOU COMMIT

- Budget for Stamp Duty Land Tax, with higher rates if you still own a US home and a 2% surcharge if you buy before you're UK resident.
- Ask for the lease length, service charge and ground rent on any flat.
- Council tax here is below the England average, but check the band for each address.

FAMILY & SCHOOLS

Schools and family life

State schools in England are allocated by admission rules that usually favor families who live closest, and you apply through your home council. Popular primaries in central London are often oversubscribed, so the address you choose matters.

Many international families choose independent or international schools. The borough has French, bilingual and international schools, the American School in London is a short drive away in St John's Wood, and ACS International Schools run buses from central London to their Hillingdon campus. Private school fees have carried 20% VAT since January 2025.

Hyde Park, Kensington Gardens and Holland Park are the borough's back gardens, with playgrounds, ponds and space to run.

BEFORE YOU COMMIT

- Apply for state school places through Kensington and Chelsea council once you have an address.
- Independent schools often have waiting lists and entrance assessments: contact them early.
- Nursery places fill quickly. Start looking as soon as you know your dates.



Pastel and white terraced houses on a tree-lined street in west London. Photo: Leandro Mazzuquini / Unsplash

SOCIAL LIFE

Culture and going out

South Kensington has the Natural History Museum, the Science Museum and the V&A, all free to enter, and the Royal Albert Hall hosts the BBC Proms every summer. Notting Hill has Portobello Road market and, over the August bank holiday weekend, the Notting Hill Carnival.

Chelsea is quieter and more polished, with the King's Road, the Saatchi Gallery and the Chelsea Flower Show every May.

TRAVEL

Getting around and getting home

The District, Circle and Piccadilly lines run through the borough, with the Central line along its northern edge. Most trips into the West End take 15 to 20 minutes, and the City around half an hour. Tap in and out with a contactless card or phone, and daily caps limit what you pay.

For flights home, the Piccadilly line runs direct to Heathrow, and the Heathrow Express and Elizabeth line leave from Paddington, just to the north. Heathrow has nonstop flights to most major US cities. Few residents need a car: parking is scarce, and driving into the central Congestion Charge zone costs £18 a day.

COMMUNITY

Finding your people

This is one of the most international parts of London. The American Women's Club of London, founded in 1899 and a founding member of the FAWCO network, and the Kensington & Chelsea Women's Club both run social events, interest groups and newcomer sessions.

School gates, church and community groups, gyms and running clubs are where most people build their circle. Thanksgiving dinners and Fourth of July parties are easy to find.

WHERE TO LOOK

A starting shortlist

Notting Hill & Holland Park

Pastel terraces, Portobello Road and leafy family streets. The Central line into town.

South Kensington

Museums, the French Lycée and a big international community. Mostly flats in grand terraces.

Chelsea

The King's Road, riverside streets and garden squares. Polished, quieter and very expensive.

Earl's Court & West Brompton

Better value flats with good Tube links on the western edge of the borough.

READ NEXT

Landfall guides for this move

How does buying a home work in England, Wales or Northern Ireland?

yourlandfall.com/guides/buying-a-home-in-england

How does renting work in the UK?

yourlandfall.com/guides/renting-in-the-uk

What happens to my stock options and RSUs when I move to the UK?

yourlandfall.com/guides/stock-options-and-rsus

How do UK schools work for American families?

yourlandfall.com/guides/uk-schools-for-american-families

See every step for your move. Answer five questions and get a free plan in the right order: yourlandfall.com/plan

Sources. Figures checked in November 2026. The London average home price was £554,000 in August 2026, and the average London rent was £2,338 a month in September 2026. Prices and rents change, so check current listings before you decide.

- UK House Price Index England: August 2026 (GOV.UK): https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-house-price-index-for-august-2026/uk-house-price-index-england-august-2026
- ONS: Private rent and house prices, UK, October 2026: https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/inflationandpriceindices/bulletins/privaterentandhousepricesuk/october2026
- MHCLG: Council Tax levels set by local authorities in England 2026 to 2027: https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/council-tax-levels-set-by-local-authorities-in-england-2026-to-2027
- GOV.UK Housing Hub: private renting has changed (Renters' Rights Act): https://housinghub.campaign.gov.uk/private-renting-is-changing/
- TfL: changes confirmed to the Congestion Charge (November 2025): https://tfl-newsroom.prgloo.com/news/changes-confirmed-to-the-congestion-charge-to-keep-london-moving-sustainably
- The American Women's Club of London: https://awclondon.wildapricot.org/

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