Middleton news.
Property views.

Summer 2026

WELCOME TO OUR 2026 NEWSLETTER

Welcome to our summer 2026 newsletter

In this edition, we look at what's shaping the market across London and the country - from Tom Hudson on the growing trend for country estates being repurposed commercially, to James Moran on what's adding value for London sellers in 2026. Jasper Colliver takes us through Sussex, a county attracting two very different types of buyer, and Rhianne McIlroy and Georgie Anstey explain why so many international clients are choosing to rent before they buy.

We also introduce the newest members of the Middleton team, share our client story on the restoration of St George's Chapel, and round up where our advisors have been featured in the press.

You'll also read about our transition to an Employee Ownership Trust - a significant step, but one that changes nothing for our clients. Tom and I remain fully committed to leading the business, and the independence that has defined Middleton since 2008 is now secured for the long term.

As ever, thank you to our clients, business partners, and fellow professionals for your continued support.

Mark Parkinson

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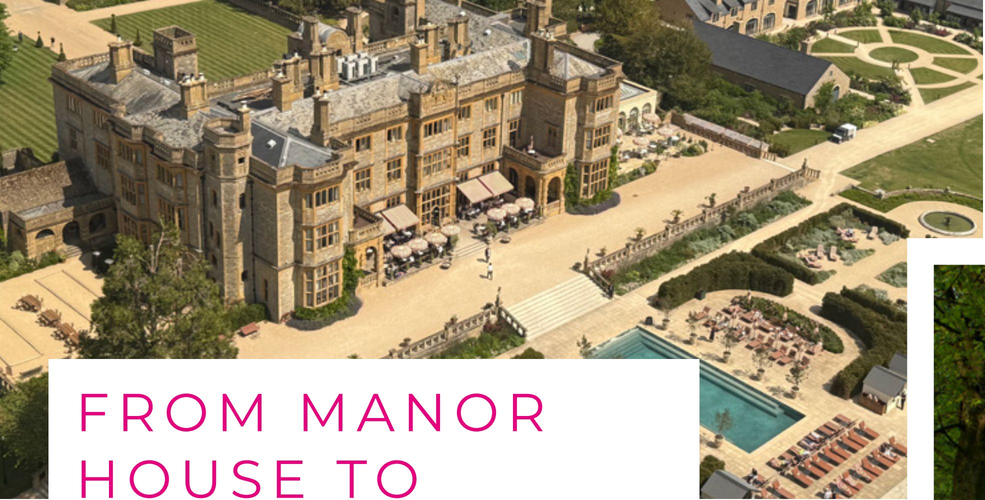

FROM MANOR HOUSE TO MEMBERS' CLUBS

Tom Hudson, Head of Estates & Special Projects, describes a new trend in the country estate sector.

"More buyers are looking at UK country estates through a commercial, rather than residential, lens. Babington House in Somerset - a private Georgian manor until Soho House converted it in 1998 - was probably the original example, and it's a good model for what's happening now."

A slow-burn trend.

"It's been a slow-burn trend - but the increased cost of owning, restoring and running an estate along with the erosion of tax advantages has given it real impetus. At the same time, the desire to own a classic British manor is as strong as ever and, with the influx of US buyers, there is more competition than ever."

"A parallel trend is for like-minded buyers to group together to share an estate as a private residence or club. Others simply 'sweat' their asset via wellness retreats and similar ventures."

Move fast. Mend things.

"The likes of Babington, Estelle Manor, Aynhoe Park, Avington Estate and Freelands Hampshire don't come to the market often - and even when they do, you could be competing with a residential buyer, making a heart over head decision."

"They will move quickly, whereas if you're assessing an estate for commercial development, your due diligence will be of an entirely different order."

"Ideally, offer on this type of property before it comes to the open market, giving you some breathing space to front-load your business planning and due diligence."

"Start building relationships with the people you'll need - a planning consultant, a conservation architect, an operator. Our 'Little Pink Book' is a good starting point."

PUTTING COUNTRY ESTATES TO WORK.

Estelle Manor - blazing a trail as a 'hosted home'.

Aynhoe Park - a restored Jacobean mansion, now the UK home of Restoration Hardware.

Avington Estate - cottages, weekend hire, wedding venue and wellness.

Freelands Hampshire - acquired and meticulously restored by Bob and Mindy Rich in 2019 - is now an exclusive estate designed for fully private stays, with eight suites, a spa retreat, a wild swimming lake, and world-renowned fly-fishing on the River Test.

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WHAT SELLS A LONDON HOUSE IN 2026

Our Sales Advisor, James Moran, identifies five key factors that London prime property owners need to keep top of mind if they want to maximise the value of their home.

Sales in much of London have remained stubbornly flat over the last couple of years - dented by waves of global economic and political uncertainty. But there are always ways of drawing out value and maximising returns from good-quality property in a city that has been dubbed 'The Capital of Capitals'. In the categories of 'prosperity', 'lovability' and 'livability', London has no equals.

James Moran
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1 CRAFTSMANSHIP OVER TECH

Media rooms and smart lighting systems have featured heavily in residential property development in recent years, but if you want to enjoy your home now, whilst protecting future value, it is hard to beat high-quality craftsmanship. Bespoke cabinetry and joinery in kitchens, studies and dressing rooms are timeless, whilst embedded technology can age quickly and become outdated.

2 TAKE THE PLUNGE

Health experts appear to be increasingly convinced of the benefits of saunas and cold plunges - and the same applies to canny property developers.

3 MAKE THE SUMMER LAST LONGER

The more you can do to make your outdoor space, not just a garden, but an outdoor kitchen, dining and entertaining area, the better your chances of potential buyers queuing up. Pizza ovens, kamados (egg-style ovens), covered areas, outdoor heating, and considered landscaping can all enhance a property's appeal.

4 GIVE YOURSELF PERMISSION

If your property has the potential for extension or remodelling, it always pays to secure planning permission in advance of selling. While developers and buyers will always identify the potential themselves, they'll factor that uncertainty into their offer price. Making the potential explicit, with outline drawings and planning permission in place, increases the appeal for private buyers.

5 DON'T FORGET THE BASICS

Don't ever forget the importance of good presentation - whether that's a big decluttering campaign ahead of viewings, or fresh flowers and ground coffee beans on the day. Make sure that the person accompanying viewings really understands the property and the location - what appealed to you originally - as well as potential for adaptation or improvement.

MORE MIDDLETON

Meet the people who have recently joined the Middleton team.

Jasper Colliver

Surrey & Sussex Advisor

Jasper Colliver has been working in prime property since 2007, and is now a leading expert in the classic commuter belt villages such as Esher, Cobham and Weybridge in Elmbridge; as far afield as the picturesque Surrey Hills villages, such as Chiddingfold, Shackleford and Holmbury St. Mary; and the highly coveted private estates, including St George's Hill and Wentworth.

He is, he says, fully embedded in Surrey, having grown up here, attended school here, and now living here with his own young family.

Georgie Anstey

Prime Central & North London Advisor

Georgie Anstey has built up a broad portfolio of experience in the private client world, including four years acquiring residential property in Prime Central and North London.

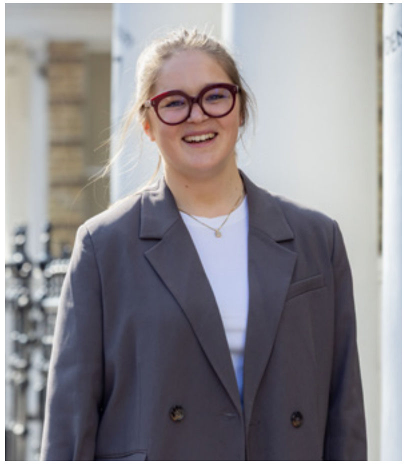
Protective of clients and meticulous in her approach, Georgie specialises in identifying off-market properties and matching clients with their ideal home.

Her combination of market knowledge, discretion and attention to detail enables her to guide clients confidently through one of the world's most complex residential property markets.

Charlotte Hall

Cotswolds Advisor

Charlotte joined Middleton as our Cotswolds Advisor, bringing a deeply embedded understanding of the villages, architecture and lifestyle of the Cotswolds where she has lived and worked for many years. She began her career in property development in London before moving to Knight Frank, where she worked across the country house and prime residential markets in the Cotswolds and the wider South of England. This experience has given her a strong commercial grounding, alongside particular expertise in equestrian property.



Tessa Brenninkmeyer

Executive Assistant

With a Master's in Social Anthropology, Tessa is fascinated by how people think, behave, and interact. This background provides a strong foundation for her role as Executive Assistant for the team at Middleton, where understanding the dynamics of people is essential - helping her stay one step ahead in supporting clients' and colleagues' needs.

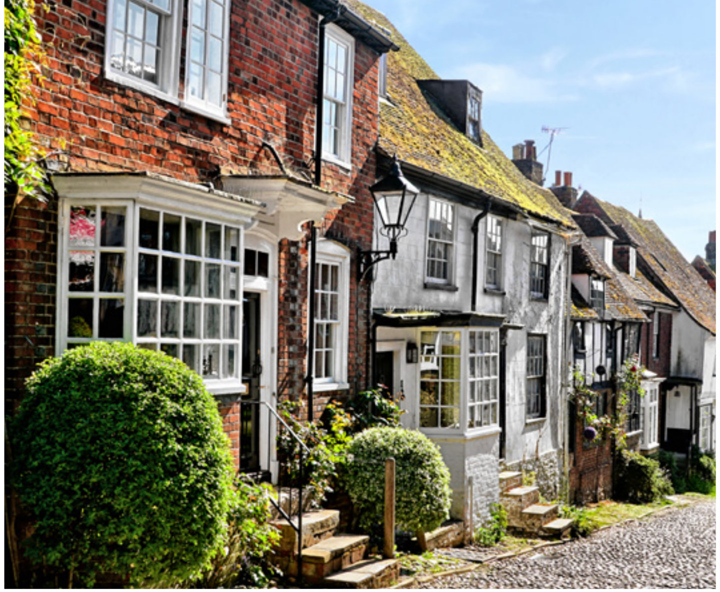
Tessa was born and raised in the Netherlands and moved to London in 2020, after living in the U.S., Germany, and Belgium.

SUSSEX - A COUNTY OF TWO HALVES

A run of best-in-class Sussex houses have, in recent months, discreetly changed hands.

Jasper Colliver, our Surrey & Sussex Advisor, analyses the factors that are drawing serious buyers to a Home County that has sometimes remained in the shadow of Hampshire, Surrey, Berkshire and Buckinghamshire.

"Sussex is, in reality, two counties in one," says Jasper. "The West has Goodwood, Cowdray Park - a classic prime property hot-spot, though distinctly more understated. The East has a more bohemian side with Brighton at its cultural epicentre and Lewes - home to an annual bonfire parade rooted in centuries-old tradition - setting the tone."



"We're seeing a clear pattern in who is drawn to each side. West Sussex attracts buyers from prime central London - Chelsea, Kensington - often in corporate or finance roles. East Sussex draws creatives, people in tech or the music industry, often coming from East London. The lifestyle they're looking for is different, and Sussex offers both."

Sussex in the sweet spot.

The common thread is the South Downs National Park - distinct architecture, picture-perfect villages featuring classic pubs, cottages and artisan shops, walking routes and proximity to the coast. With a comfortable commute into London and key airports, there's an elbow room factor here - a sense of space that's hard to find elsewhere.

The higher the demand, the more likely these properties sell without ever appearing on the open market. "Right now, there is very little chance of being in the bidding for a best-in-class Sussex home without an extensive network of agents and professionals keeping their ears to the ground," says Jasper.

Understated. Discreet. Varied.

Finding the right property is only part of the process. Our expertise lies in what comes afterwards - accurate valuation, negotiation and thorough due diligence. For properties of this calibre, that rigour is essential.

"There are opportunities in both East and West Sussex. But it pays to put in the groundwork if you want to be in the best position when they arise."

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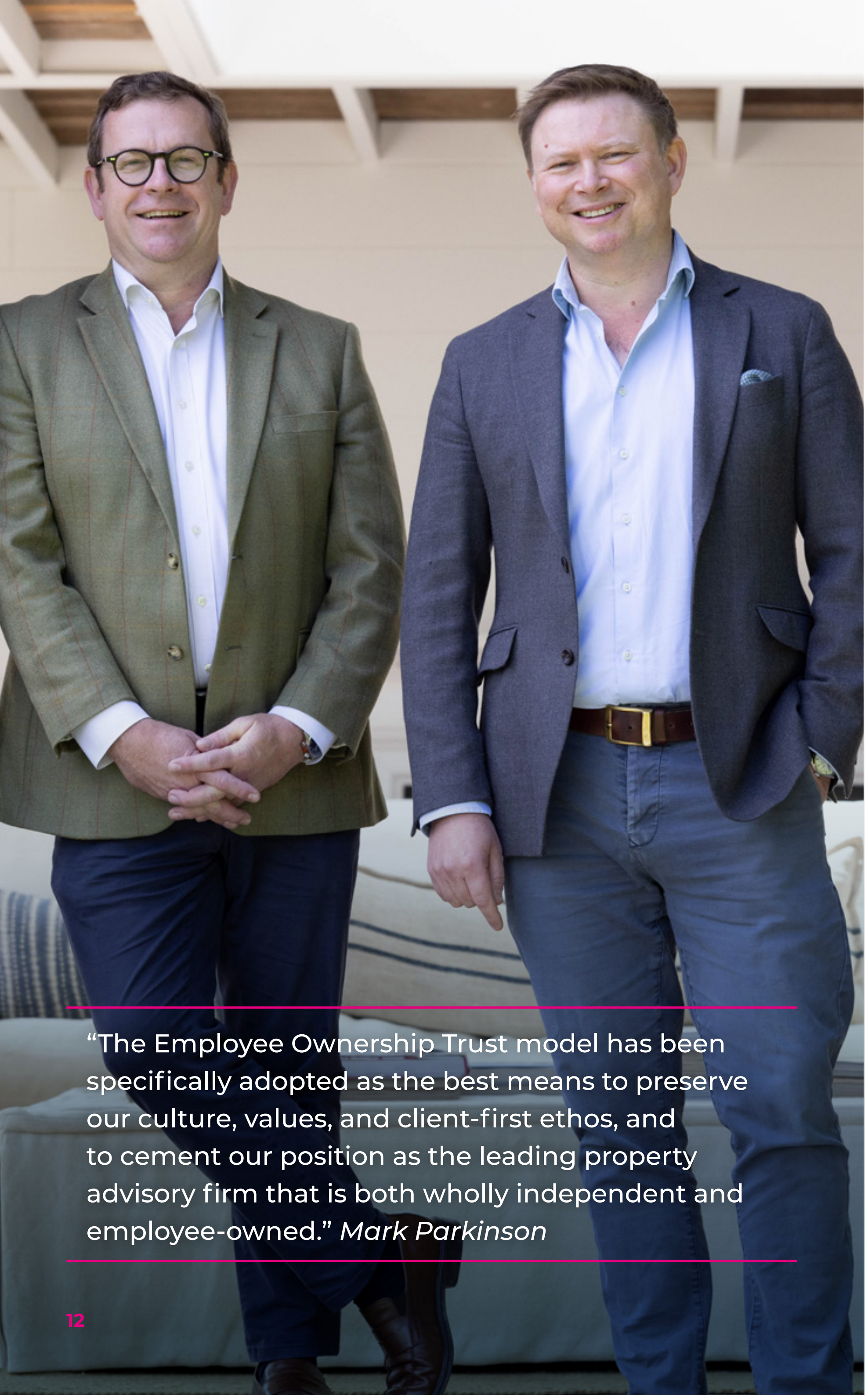

"The Employee Ownership Trust model has been specifically adopted as the best means to preserve our culture, values, and client-first ethos, and to cement our position as the leading property advisory firm that is both wholly independent and employee-owned." *Mark Parkinson*

Proudly employee owned.

SECURING OUR INDEPENDENCE

We recently secured our future as an independent business by transitioning to an Employee Ownership Trust (EOT).

Under the new EOT structure, 90% of Middleton Advisors is now held in trust on behalf of our employees, with founders Mark Parkinson and Tom Hudson each retaining a 5% stake and remaining in full control of Middleton's strategic direction. With no external shareholders and no risk of sale to a third party - we have committed to retaining our independence and giving members of the team a stake in the company's success.

The Employee Ownership Trust is represented by a Trust Board - comprising Juliette Stacey, Chris Eadie, and Mark Parkinson - who provide oversight of the management team and will ensure the business is consistently run in the best interests of stakeholders including employees and clients.

"We founded Middleton Advisors to be independent, client-focused, and free from outside influence," says Mark Parkinson. "The EOT model safeguards that independence into the future while rewarding the people who are integral to our success."

"Tom and I are as committed as ever to leading the business, and building long-term relationships with our clients. We've always aimed to deliver sustainable, long-term growth and - after exploring a range of options - we concluded that the EOT model is the best way to achieve that."

Tom adds: "This has been a step forward for the whole business. Our clients can be confident that our values, approach, and service will remain the same as we move forward."

WHEN BUYING CAN WAIT: WHY SOME CLIENTS ARE RENTING FIRST IN LONDON

A strategic first step

For many international clients, London is already an important part of their lives but deciding how best to establish a base here is not always straightforward. It may be a work base, shaped by schooling, or a city they want to understand before buying.

"We've seen a significant increase in activity over the past few years," says Rhianne McIlroy, Prime Central & South West London Advisor. "Many of these clients already own homes internationally and view London as one of several global bases."

The pull of schools and lifestyle

At the top end of this market, renting can be strategic rather than a compromise. It allows a family to settle quickly, test a location, understand school routines, and decide whether, where and when to buy.

"The school calendar is often a major driver," says Georgie Anstey, Prime Central & North London Advisor. "For some families, renting gives them the flexibility to be in London for the years they need, without committing to buy before they are ready."

Finding the right home quietly

Clients may be travelling, managing several homes, or arriving with little time to organise details themselves. They need to step off a plane and into a home that is ready from the moment they arrive - secure, discreet, well located and set up for day-to-day life.

Developments such as The Peninsula, Chelsea Barracks and One Grosvenor Square appeal for this reason, offering service, security and proximity to central London. Many of the best available homes are secured

privately, through long-standing relationships.

"The best properties at this level rarely come to the open market," says Georgie. "With some owners deciding to hold rather than sell, there's an opportunity for renters - and we can access these directly through our network. Owner-occupied homes often have a better finish than those refurbished by investment landlords - more personality, more lived-in. For the right client, it's an ideal time to explore."

For clients, the value of advice lies in removing uncertainty: lawyers on both sides, checks to complete, and terms to negotiate carefully. Clients are often abroad, with wider teams around them, and expect the process to keep moving without constant involvement.

"It is about making a complicated decision feel manageable," says Rhianne. "Clients need clarity, discretion and someone they trust to act in their best interests."

Rhianne McIlroy

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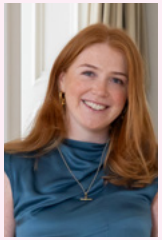

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CLIENT STORY:

THE VALUE OF HERITAGE, LEGACY AND EXCELLENCE

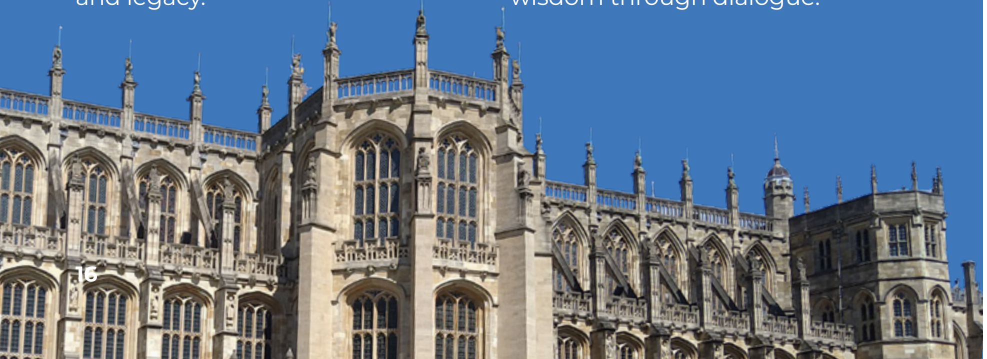
Like many Middleton clients, the care of a listed building is, for William Charnley, a labour of love.

As a member of the Bray Fellowship supporting one of the UK's most significant architectural landmarks - St George's Chapel in the grounds of Windsor Castle - William has taken this commitment a step further.

"The College of St George - comprising the Chapel, Cloisters, Deanery, Curfew Tower and Quire - is a self-funding charity and a masterpiece of architectural stewardship," says William. "It's an undertaking that I believe will resonate with other Middleton clients, who instinctively tend to appreciate the value of heritage and legacy."

"St George's Chapel, which celebrated its 550th anniversary in 2025, is a fundamental part of UK heritage in its own right," says William. "My personal interest isn't only in the Grade I listed building, but in the fact that the Chapel has, over the course of time, become a centre for several fields of excellence - philanthropic, educational, musical."

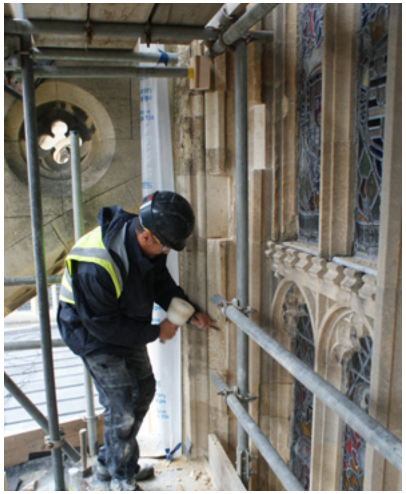
The charity, for example, supports an intellectual think-tank for leadership and dialogue founded by the late Prince Philip, whose mission is to effect change for the better in society by nurturing wisdom through dialogue.



The charity also supports St George's, a world-renowned Choir School. And the Chapel itself is the setting for historic events, including official visits by heads of foreign states, royal services and weddings.

"All of this," says William, "combines to make St George's a vital part of our past, present and future, funded entirely by private philanthropy."

"The self-funding charity of The College of St George invests in our architectural heritage, in scholarship and in long-term strategic thinking."
William Charnley,
Middleton client



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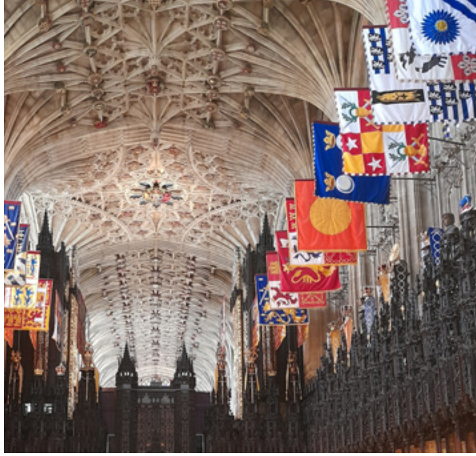

THE COLLEGE OF ST GEORGE, POINTS OF INTEREST

The College of St George was founded in 1348 by King Edward III.

The Chapel of the College of St George is a 'Royal Peculiar' - a church under the direct jurisdiction of the monarch, of which there are fewer than fifteen.

St George's Chapel is one of the world's best examples of 'Perpendicular Gothic' architecture. It is open to visitors via the Windsor Castle admission centre.

Scan to learn more

MIDDLETON MENTIONS

Our advisors are regularly asked to comment on economic factors, trends and events impacting the property market. Here's a selection from the last few months.

Oliver Sanhaji on station regeneration and property values.

Featured in the Financial Times

"Resales at King's Cross have seen 12-15% price increases - something not many new-build owners in London can claim."

Ben Horne on the prime country market in 2026.

Featured in the Financial Times

"These intelligent, financially literate buyers are measuring the opportunity - one was browsing last year, now in buying mode."

Edward Sainter on waterfront homes.

Featured in Country Life

"Riverside homes are rare - especially those with private moorings - and often remain in families for generations."

Hollie Byrne on her path into property.

Featured in Prime Resi

"Qualifying as a Chartered Surveyor fundamentally shaped my professional path - not just the qualification, but the network."

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