



# MULBERRY RELOCATIONS

## Guide to West London

Edition 1.0

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## Life in West London

From wide Georgian streets clustered around private gardens and squares to winding Victorian townhouses and apartments, West London remains one of the most desirable places to live in the Capital.

The development of West London as a residential area first began during the mid seventeenth hundreds when the city was at the centre of a growing British empire. Before then, much of West London remained agricultural, enabling farmers to benefit from the close proximity of London's markets and traders.

However, it was during the early nineteenth century that serious residential development in the West really took hold. By this time, London wasn't just the largest capital city in the world; it was also the key player in the industrial revolution. In 1838, West London had its first railway station – Paddington. Paddington was in fact the third railway station to be built in London, but the first towards the West of the city and heralded the coming of age for this increasingly popular part of town.

It is this industrious past to which West London owes a great deal. The cramming of Victorian buildings along Portobello Road has helped create a uniqueness and charm to the street which winds the entire length of Notting Hill. Among the large, grand Georgian squares of Mayfair and Belgravia, quiet little courtyards, buzzing restaurants and deli's encourage an almost village feel to an area which is just minutes away from some of the City's major shopping facilities and transport networks. A few minutes further west the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea offers beautiful parkland, one of London's most popular high streets, and a number of critically acclaimed galleries and museums.

West London combines its rich heritage with a modern, cosmopolitan living to great effect. Whether you are looking to live in a thriving, high paced environment or a slightly more laid back affair, West London has something for everyone.



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## **West London Boroughs and Areas**

Mulberry Relocations specialises in finding and securing homes in the City of Westminster and the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea. Clients benefit from extensive knowledge of areas such as Bayswater, Kensington, Chelsea, Knightsbridge, Marylebone, Mayfair and Notting Hill as well as additional knowledge of the London Boroughs of Camden and Hammersmith and Fulham. Our focus has allowed us to build an extensive knowledge of this small, but beautiful part of London. Here are our thoughts on our favourite parts of the City.

### ***Bayswater***

Set in the heart of Westminster, Bayswater borders onto Hyde Park, towards the North side, near Kensington Gardens. It is regarded as one of the most cosmopolitan areas in London and a centre London's Greek, American and Brazilian communities.

Bayswater, and more broadly Westminster, benefits from many good schools, including 10 secondary schools and a number of highly regarded independent schools – most notably Westminster School, Hill House School and Southbank International School.

With a high concentration of hotels, and a large selection of popular eateries, Bayswater is a safe and vibrant place to live. It is well served by strong transport links, including tube, with the District, Circle and Central lines all serving the area from around 5.30am until midnight. After this time, a well used night bus service provides transport home from the centre of town.

Above ground, the Queensway Road lies at the heart of Bayswater, providing a wide array of shops and restaurants to suit all tastes and culinary preferences. Ice skating, a night at the movies and even a trip to the Turkish baths are just a few of the entertainment possibilities available on an evening in Bayswater! Quiet residential streets merge off the lively Queensway road, and it is here that some of the areas best loved pubs can be found, most of which are Victorian, serving both drinks and food throughout the day.

### ***Kensington & Chelsea***

It would be remiss of any relocation consultancy to write about Kensington and Chelsea without first mentioning the simply stunning property that can be found throughout the borough.

Kensington and Chelsea is an area bursting with the most exquisite buildings, streets and squares. And yet despite being the most affluent borough in Britain, it is still possible to find good properties for a fair price in both Kensington and Chelsea.



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According to the 2008 research of mouseprice.net, 15 of London's most exclusive streets are found within the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea. Even if your budget doesn't quite stretch to a multimillion pound price tag, it is worth a walk around these delightful streets just for the architecture alone. And then of course, there is one of the capital's most beautiful royal residences – Kensington Palace. Recently home to the late Diana, Princess of Wales, Kensington Palace has been a royal home since the reign of William III and today its gardens and park are enjoyed by tourists, families and fitness fanatics alike.

Kensington High Street and the King's Road in Chelsea are two of the capital's most enjoyable streets to shop and have remained fashionable since the sixties, when both played a critical role in shaping London as the centre for 'youth culture'. Independent cafes, restaurants and bars adorn Kensington and Chelsea while the prized Royal Albert Hall remains one of the most unique music venues in the capital.

The underground Circle, District and Piccadilly lines make travelling to, from and within the large Borough of Kensington and Chelsea extremely easy. Overland train routes also operate from Victoria (just a five minute walk from Chelsea's Sloane Square) with links to the South Coast, and importantly, Gatwick Airport. Heathrow is a 40 minute tube journey on the Piccadilly Line.

### ***Knightsbridge***

While many think of Knightsbridge as simply an area of London, it is in fact named after just one road which runs the length of Hyde Park, through Kensington before becoming the A4 – a major route in and out through the West of the City into the county of Berkshire. While road links are impressive, Knightsbridge is equally blessed by the efficient Piccadilly Tube Line, which takes commuters from Knightsbridge to the heart of the West End in just three stops while in the opposite direction, links directly to Heathrow Airport.

One of the most exclusive areas in London, Knightsbridge is home to a number of celebrities, socialites and aristocrats. The exclusive Harrods and Harvey Nichols stores provide the perfect retail therapy, while towards the edge of Knightsbridge in the neighbouring borough of Fulham lies Chelsea Football Club, one of the richest clubs in the world.

Knightsbridge has a number of leading educational institutions, from independent pre preparatory schools through to the internationally renowned Imperial College. Interestingly, many of London's French community live in Knightsbridge and South Kensington, and the Lycée Français Charles De Gaulle is just less than a mile away in South Kensington, opposite the French Consulate.



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Properties in Knightsbridge remain highly sought after, and as a result, prices are at a premium. Grand Georgian houses feature heavily at the top of the market, as well as the delightful brick built mews houses – a much loved feature around the parks of West London. Knightsbridge Village, the triangle within Knightsbridge, Old Brompton Road & Exhibition Road, is full of cottages, mews & large, spacious town houses, many of which are now converted into flats. All of these are available to both buy and rent.

### ***Marylebone***

Managed predominantly by the Howard De Walden Estate, Marylebone is best described as an urban village and has emerged as an oasis at the very heart of the city. In fact, if you enter Marylebone by one of the small alleyways leading from Oxford Street, you feel as if you have crossed into a different place altogether. A diverse range of independent shops, delis and stores have helped to create a unique feel to the 92 acre area, while it's education facilities, from nursery to university have helped to ensure that Marylebone has a strong, rooted sense of community for all to enjoy.

Because of its central location, Marylebone is well served by a number of Tube lines, which conveniently sit on the various parameters of the area; Great Portland Street and Regent's Park are to the North, Baker Street to the West while Oxford Street and Bond Street are to the South.

The world famous Harley Street is also part of Marylebone, and has long been established as an area where many of the most progressive medical experts, academics and practioners work.

### ***Mayfair***

Surrounding the old cobbled streets of Shepherd Market is Mayfair – one of the capitals best known and much loved areas. Named after a regular fair that used to take place at Shepherd Market, Mayfair has become synonymous with its famous squares – Berkeley, Hanover and Grosvenor to name three, beautiful designer shopping and luxury hotels such as the Dorchester, Claridges and the Ritz.

Green Park edges onto Mayfair, providing 47 acres of parkland. A quick ten minute stroll across the Park brings you to Buckingham Palace where tourists gather daily to see the changing of the Guard.

Despite its central location, Mayfair is an extremely green part of town, thanks to its many gardens and open spaces. Underground stations include Piccadilly and Bond Street Tube, while black cabs and buses provide ample transport above ground.



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While Bond Street, Regent Street and their arterial roads provide the obvious choice for shoppers, the Royal Arcade and the Burlington Arcade are a real treat, if only for the exquisite buildings which house some of the city's most exclusive independent retailers.

A number of important cultural institutions are also situated in Mayfair, including the Royal Academy of Arts, which was established in 1768 and continues to exhibit some of the most important art collections in the world.

### ***Notting Hill***

While technically Notting Hill sits within the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, we could not help but write an additional section for a truly special part of London. While the Notting Hill Carnival and 1999 hit film have made the area famous, Notting Hill has undergone tremendous change during the last twenty years, and thanks to a major regeneration project, has become one of the most affluent and fashionable parts of the city.

Notting Hill has been associated with artists and designers since the early eighteenth century, at a time when the area was largely owned by the Ladbroke Family, the namesake for many of today's streets and roads. Today, Westbourne Grove is one of the most fashionable streets in Notting Hill home to a host of new designers, flagship stores and lifestyle boutiques.

Portobello Road runs the length of Notting Hill, and is famous for its antique's market, which takes place every Saturday. As well as antiques, many of the market stalls are run by young artists and new designers, which helps retain a vibrant, bustling energy to the area.

Notting Hill was part of the city's surrounding countryside up until the 19<sup>th</sup> Century but grew exponentially to accommodate London's growing industrial workforce. Victorian townhouses, many of which have since been converted to spacious apartments, are typical of the area. So too are mews properties – beautifully constructed homes that were also built in the 1800's. Their simple cottage feel, with open fires, sash windows and stable doors are delightful. An area known as Hillgate Village, which sits between Notting Hill Gate, Campden Hill Road, Kensington Church Street and High Street Kensington has many such houses sitting elegantly along its streets, many of which remain as one home rather than converted into flats.

Similar to the rest of Kensington and Chelsea, Notting Hill benefits from a strong transport infrastructure, thanks to good bus links and underground system.



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## What to do and Where to go

### *Annual Events*

#### **Chelsea Flower Show**

This annual event, taking place in May every year in the grounds of the Royal Hospital near Sloane Square is a must for gardeners and enthusiasts everywhere. For just one week, the Hospital grounds are transformed into a heady cocktail of stalls, flawlessly designed gardens, and the latest garden gadgets and gizmos. For information please visit [www.rhs.org.uk/chelsea](http://www.rhs.org.uk/chelsea).

#### **Notting Hill Carnival**

Since 1966, visitors and residents alike have been donning elaborate costumes to celebrate Europe's largest street festival. Taking place on the August bank holiday, the Notting Hill Carnival has worked hard to ensure a safe, fun environment for all the family. For more information visit: [www.thenottinghillcarnival.com](http://www.thenottinghillcarnival.com).

#### **The Proms**

Founded in 1895, the Proms, or Promenade Concerts, are an eight-week summer festival of classical concerts held predominantly at the Royal Albert Hall in South Kensington. It is most famous for its "Last Night", usually the second Saturday in September, where the keenest audience members camp out the night before the event to guarantee entry. The concerts are televised by the BBC and more information is available from [www.bbc.co.uk/proms](http://www.bbc.co.uk/proms).

### **Museums**

West London is brimming with some of the country's best museums including three of our favourites; the Science Museum, Natural History Museum and the Victoria and Albert Museum. Information for each can be found at:

[www.sciencemuseum.org.uk](http://www.sciencemuseum.org.uk) – Science Museum

[www.nhm.ac.uk](http://www.nhm.ac.uk) – Natural History Museum

[www.vam.ac.uk](http://www.vam.ac.uk) – Victoria and Albert Museum

The museums offer free entry to most of their galleries, although there may be a small charge for the temporary exhibitions.





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### ***Eating Out***

With so many restaurants and café's to choose from, the Internet provides one of the best sources of recommendations and reviews as well as a number of exclusive offers.

Our recommendations include:

[www.toptable.co.uk](http://www.toptable.co.uk) – Restaurant Guide and booking online facility for some of the City's best restaurants and bars

[www.timeout.co.uk](http://www.timeout.co.uk) – London's essential leisure guide

### ***Parks and Gardens***

<b>Space</b>	<b>Area</b>	<b>Nearest Tube Stations</b>
Green Park	Bordering Mayfair	Green Park, Hyde Park Corner
Hyde Park	Borders Bayswater, Mayfair and Knightsbridge	Lancaster Gate, Marble Arch, Hyde Park Corner, Knightsbridge
Kensington Gardens	Borders Bayswater, Kensington and Knightsbridge	Lancaster Gate, Bayswater, Queensway
Regents Park	Marylebone	Baker Street, Regents Park, Great Portland Street
Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew	Slightly further afield in Kew – near Richmond	Kew Gardens Station

For more information about London's parks please visit [www.royalparks.org.uk](http://www.royalparks.org.uk)

### ***Theatres, Cinemas and Galleries***

West London is home to a wide number of Cinema's and Galleries. Many small Theatres also operate with the area, including the Open Air Theatre: at Regents Park.

For a complete listing of events in London, Time Out remains one of the best guides available. For more please visit: [www.timeout.com/london](http://www.timeout.com/london)



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For specific information regarding performances taking place in the capital's theatres, please visit: [www.officiallondontheatre.co.uk](http://www.officiallondontheatre.co.uk).

### **Sport and Recreational Activities**

West London has some of the best sporting facilities in the City. Regent's Park is home to the largest grass area for sports in Central London and offers a wide variety of activities. Horseriding, running, rowing, rollerblading, cycling and ice skating are just a few of the many sports available in the area.

Meanwhile if your preference is to watch sport rather than participate, West London provides something for everyone. Football fans can soak up the atmosphere at Chelsea's grounds at Stamford Bridge which sits at the far end of the King's Road. Just along from Chelsea, you can pick your spot along the Thames each spring to watch the annual Oxford and Cambridge University Boat Race while just seven miles south of SW3 is Wimbledon, home to the All England Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club, and to the celebrated annual Wimbledon Championships.

### **Shopping**

West London is a haven for shopaholics. Designer boutiques, fashion houses and exclusive stores fill many of its streets while in 2008 the Westfield in nearby Shepherd's Bush was built, arguably becoming one of the most luxurious shopping centres in the world.

Here is our list of essentials:

[www.westfield.com](http://www.westfield.com) – From couture to high street classics, Westfield Shopping Centre is *the* ultimate shopping centre

[www.harrods.com](http://www.harrods.com) - London's most famous department store

[www.harveynichols.com](http://www.harveynichols.com) – Another Knightsbridge classic stocking only the finest designer labels.

[www.peterjones.co.uk](http://www.peterjones.co.uk) – Seven floors of fashion, interiors and John Lewis essentials on Sloane Square

[www.selfridges.com](http://www.selfridges.com) – Situated in the heart of one of London's busiest shopping streets, Selfridges and Co is one of capital's oldest and most iconic department stores

### **Streets and Markets**

Bond Street – upmarket designer flagship stores embellish one of London's most famous shopping streets. Nearest tube: Green Park or Bond Street.



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Oxford Street – popular high street stores jockey for attention down the entire length of this long and very busy shopping street. Primark, a relative newcomer to Oxford street, has its flagship store situated towards Marble Arch where queues of eager bargain hunters are often found waiting for the store to open (or to simply pay!) throughout the year. Tubes: Marble Arch, Bond Street and Oxford Circus.

Kensington High Street – The birthplace of youth culture. Closest tube: High Street Kensington.

The Kings Road – Home to the Designers Guild, Peter Jones and a whole host of high end high street stores. Closest tube: Sloane Square.

Marylebone High Street – London's most eclectic shopping street with nearby St Christopher Place providing the perfect spot for a bite of lunch. Nearest tube: Oxford Circus, Great Portland Street, Regents Park, Baker Street

Portobello Road Market – Market stalls meander full of clothes, accessories and of course antiques meander through the centre of Notting Hill every Saturday. Closest tube: Ladbroke Grove or Notting Hill Gate.

Shepherd Market – independent jewellery shops and small boutiques nestle amongst cafés and restaurants – including the Chocolate Society café and shop. Nearest tube: Green Park.



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### Getting Around

As indicated earlier on, West London is one of the most accessible parts of the capital.

For essential travel in and around the capital, visit the Transport for London website, [www.tfl.gov.uk](http://www.tfl.gov.uk).

### *Postcodes and Tube Travel*

<b>Area</b>	<b>Postcodes</b>	<b>Tube and Transport Links</b>
Bayswater	<b>W2</b>	Tube Stations: Queensway, Bayswater Tube Lines: Circle and District
Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea	<b>SW3, SW7, W8, W14</b>	Tube Stations: Sloane Square, High Street Kensington, South Kensington, Tube Lines: Circle and District
Knightsbridge	<b>SW3, SW7</b>	Tube Stations: Hyde Park Corner, Knightsbridge Tube Line: Piccadilly
Marylebone	<b>W1, NW1,</b>	Tube Stations: Oxford Circus, Great Portland Street, Regents Park, Bond Street, Baker Street Tube Lines: Central, Bakerloo, Victoria and Jubilee
Mayfair	<b>W1</b>	Tube Stations: Green Park, Bond Street Tube Lines: Victoria, Jubilee, Piccadilly
Notting Hill	<b>W10, W11</b>	Tube Stations: Notting Hill Gate, Ladbrooke Grove Tube Lines: Hammersmith & city, Circle, District and Central



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## **A Final Note about the West London Guide**

Places change, buildings appear, roads get redirected and congestion charging zones expand. Well, sometimes. But the point is this guide to West London has been put together by Mulberry Relocations Ltd in good faith. We continually check and update the guides we create, both for West London and for West Kent, so please do keep an eye on our website for new information.

Alternatively, for up to the minute advice on living in West London, please contact Mulberry Relocations.

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