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The Darwoods guide to
Buy To Let
in St Albans



Investing in St Albans

St Albans is the oldest town in Hertfordshire and is the main sought-after residential area of Southern Hertfordshire, located around 22 miles north of central London. During Roman times the town grew to become the third largest in Britain. The growth of St Albans can be seen in the wide range of architecture in its streets from the Medieval heart of the City to the leafy suburbs, examples of every building style can be seen. In 1877 a Royal Charter gave City status and overnight the ancient Abbey became St Albans Cathedral. Apart from the historic City Centre St Albans is highly suburban in character and entirely surrounded by Green Belt countryside.

House prices are considerably above the national average due largely to fast commuting to London, especially the City by train on First Capital Connect, which also directly connects with Eurostar at St Pancras. The local road network is another factor providing fast connections to London and the North.

Many families choose St Albans to rent property to benefit from the catchment areas for sought-after schools which perform well in the education leagues. The rents achieved locally are also above the national average reflecting the local strong demand for property from professional tenants.

St Albans combines olde worlde with cosmopolitan chic to provide a fantastic place to live.

Attractions

The Cathedral, of course, remains the most important attraction. Built on a mound, the magnificent building continues to dominate the City's skyline at every approach. Many of the City's historical buildings have survived and now provide valuable tourism revenue for the City. Some of these buildings date back to the 15th Century, including the Clock Tower and the St Albans Market, still held every Wednesday and Saturday.

The Clock Tower is the only Medieval town belfry in the country. The bell, striking on the hour, is even older than the tower itself.

Verulamium Park is the main open space with 100 acres of parkland including a lake with wildlife and the River Ver. Verulamium also plays host to a number of special events including St Albans Carnival during August Bank Holiday and the annual Firework Display in November. The football pitches, basketball/netball and tennis courts situated within the park always prove a popular attraction whilst Westminster Lodge Leisure Centre caters for a variety of leisure activities including swimming, fitness classes and golf.

There is much to see and do in St Albans, you can discover the life and times of a major Roman City at the Verulamium Museum. Nearby are the De Havilland Aircraft Heritage Museum and the Gardens of the Rose, the flagship gardens of the Royal Rose Society.

Beyond the City of St Albans there is plenty to explore. A wealth of villages offering good pubs, beautiful walks, historic churches and many modern attractions. Further a field, just a few miles away from St Albans, are other attractions and stately homes, including Hatfield House and Knebworth House.

Shopping

Shopping in the City is a pleasure, with its historic ambience providing the setting in which to explore a range of well known High Street names alongside many specialist shops offering antiques, books, designer clothes, furniture, giftware, jewellery and more. The bustling market fills the City Centre streets every Wednesday and Saturday, offering an enormous variety of goods. St Albans also plays host to the Sunday Farmers Market once a month. The City is well provided with over 120 restaurants and cafes and a great number of historic pubs and inns for that well deserved refreshment break.

Transport

Close to the M1, A1(M) and M25, St Albans is easily accessible from all parts of the UK. First Capital Connect into London's St Pancras is 20 minutes away from St Albans and there are frequent services throughout the day and night. The rail service also connects St Albans to Luton, Luton Airport and Bedford in the north and Gatwick Airport and Brighton in the south. The Abbey station service via Watford connects St Albans with the North London line and the West Coast Main Line, which links London Euston to the north west of England and Scotland.

What to buy

Please note that the figures below are based on recent sales in St Albans and are correct at the time of going to print. For information relevant to your specific requirements please speak to our experienced Lettings Consultants who have excellent knowledge of the local market and will be happy to advise you.

Type of Property	Demand	Purchase Price (approximate)	Rent Ranges
Studio	Medium	£125K	£ 500 - £ 600 pcm
One bed (Purpose built)	Very High	£175K	£ 600 - £ 900 pcm
One bed (Conversion)	Very High	£180K	£ 600 - £ 900 pcm
Two bed (Purpose built)	High	£240K	£ 750 - £1300 pcm
Two bed (Conversion)	Medium	£250K	£ 750 - £1200 pcm
Two bed (Terraced)	Very High	£280K - £300K	£ 850 - £1100 pcm
Three bed (Terraced)	Very High	£350K	£ 900 - £1300 pcm
Three bed (Semi-Detached)	Very High	£400K	£ 950 - £1400 pcm
Three bed (Detached)	Very High	£450K	£1100 - £1500 pcm
Four bed (Detached)	Very High	£500K	£1500 - £2500 pcm
Five bed (Detached)	High	£600K	£2000 - £4000 pcm

Presentation

Tenants are very discerning and look for good quality fixtures and fittings, presented in clean and tidy order with tasteful décor. Properties are best presented in neutral colours such as cream, beige or white which will appeal to most tastes. Plain carpets or wooden flooring are most popular. As a minimum, the property must have white goods including a hob and oven, fridge and washer/dryer, and curtains and carpets.

