ST LAURENCE’S HALL

16-22 London Road, Reading

A development of 2 bedroom stylish apartments
A stylish conversion in the heart of Reading

Located on one of the most beautiful wide streets in Reading, St Laurence’s Hall is the third phase of apartments and homes in a stylish conversion project of a total of 53 properties.

With the Royal Berkshire Hospital, the University of Reading and The Oracle Shopping Centre all within a short walk, these two bedroom apartments are ideally situated within the growing town of Reading.

16-40 London Road, Reading has been chosen as a finalist for the prestigious Thames Valley Property Awards 2018, under the Residential Development of the Year category.
A beautiful building in a classic setting

St Laurence’s Hall is one of three buildings in this row on London Road to be converted – St Mary’s and St David’s have been completed with St Laurence’s being the final phase of this redevelopment.

Constructed in the 19th Century, these properties have always presented an imposing frontage to one of Reading’s main thoroughfares. The buildings were originally used as dwellings but later acquired by the University for teaching and administration and formed part of the London Road campus (one of three in the town) which includes the impressive Grade II listed Great Hall where thousands of students attend their graduation ceremonies every year.

Kendrick Conservation Area.
The buildings on London Road fall within the Kendrick Conservation Area in the town which features a number of historic properties that are either listed or have considerable architectural and historic interest. As well as the early 19th century buildings on either side of London Road the area includes large mid-19th century dwellings in Kendrick Road and Redlands Road and a collection of early 20th century university buildings that are part of the only university established in the period between the two World Wars.
Despite a busy and varied history, Reading is still to achieve status as a City but locals are happy that their town on the Thames and Kennet rivers in Berkshire is possibly the largest town in the country.

Much of the wealth of the town was established in the 18th Century when many of the impressive buildings that characterise the area around London Road were built and the majority are now listed for their special architectural and historic interest. This has long been a main thoroughfare carrying traffic east-west through the town and has an impressive and elegant feel due to its spacious nature and the mature trees and properties that line the road.

The famous ‘Bs’ of Reading.

One famous resident, at The Acacias in London Road, was George Palmer who, in 1841, joined Joseph Huntley to create the world famous Reading biscuit manufacturing business Huntley and Palmers. This was to become one of the famous ‘Bs’ for which Reading is known and also gave the nickname of ‘The Biscuitmen’ to Reading Football Club – since changed from the early 1970s to ‘The Royals’.

The other ‘B’ in question come from Beer and Bulbs: Simonds Brewery pioneered a lighter, dry-hopped style of beer from 1785 to 1980, mostly on a site by the river which helped with distribution by barge and a major local employer in their day; John Sutton founded his company in 1806, later moved to The Market Place, and gained international recognition as a supplier of seeds, bulbs, plants and bushes to amateur gardeners worldwide, although Suttons left Reading in 1976 and now operate from Paignton in Devon.

Timeline of Reading’s history

600s: The Saxon leader Reada settled in the area with his tribe.
500-1500s: Cloth, leather and wool were main industries in the town.
1086: Population of Reading was around 600.
1400s: Reading was 10th largest town in England measured by taxable wealth.
1628: The Oracle workhouse was erected, with money left by merchant James Kendrick, and the poor employed there to make cloth.
1723: First newspaper in the town, the Reading Mercury.
1785: Simonds Brewery opened in Broad Street.
1801: Population of Reading less than 10,000.
1806: John Sutton, a corn and seed merchant, founded Suttons seeds.
1822: Joseph Huntley opened a biscuit bakery, later to become Huntley and Palmers and at one stage employing more than 5000 people.
1839: Royal Berkshire Hospital opened.
1840: Railway links established with London and Bristol.
1879: Horse-drawn trams began running in Reading.
1909: Reading gained its first cinemas.
1926: Reading University opened.
1971: Broad Street Mall and Friars Walk shopping centre opened.
1971: The Reading Music Festival established its home in the town.
1975: Reading listened to its first commercial radio station.
1999: Reading FC moves to the new £50m Madejeski Stadium.
1999: The new Oracle shopping centre opened.
2011: Population 155,700 and thought to be Britain’s biggest town.
2012: Reading falls in its bid for city status for the third time in just over a decade.
Today, Reading is very much a commercial centre with several big IT, telecoms and financial service employers.

There are more incoming than outgoing commuters at the moment in Reading though this may change when Crossrail arrives in 2019. However, you can already catch a fast train to Paddington in 30 minutes and the motorway is within easy access at junctions 10-12 of the M4.

Perhaps most famous for the annual August music festival, Reading is also home to several smaller music and arts venues. Reading Museum, housed in the Victorian town hall holds regular exhibitions while the Museum of English Rural Life (MERL) recently re-opened after a £3million redevelopment.

Walks along the river.

Parks include Forbury Gardens, with the famous Mainward Lion sculpture and war memorial, and Palmer and Prospect Parks - but there are also plenty of opportunities for peaceful walks along the river.

Reading enjoys seven miles of unspoilt river frontage and both the Kennet, running through the centre, and the Thames, a few hundred yards north, play an important role in the town’s leisure time. As well as the rowing clubs that line the banks, narrow boats and other craft are often seen through the locks while the Thames Path provides walks through the centre to pubs, cafes and restaurants.

Shops and entertainment.

The Kennet bisects the main shopping centre, The Oracle - offering high fashion, brands and gifts as well as an unrivalled choice of restaurants and a 10-screen cinema - but there are plenty of further retail options, including Marks and Spencer and John Lewis in Broad Street and a good range of independents at the Harris Arcade. And if you want an easy way to kit out your home then there’s the new IKEA store (opened 2016) by junction 12 of the M4.

The next big attraction in Reading will be the Station Hill development, in a three acre site opposite the station. Set to include a mix of office space, shops, restaurants and apartments, this will further improve facilities as commuter traffic increases.

Education on the doorstep.

Reading has some leading private schools and two top performing grammar schools – Kendrick (for girls) and Reading School (for boys) - which are both rated ‘outstanding’ plus a number of ‘good’ comprehensives. There is also a wide choice of private schools nearby, including Pangbourne College, Bradfield College, The Abbey School and Reddam House (formerly Bearwood College).

In addition, the University of Reading, with 17,000 students from 150 countries, is ranked in the top 1% of universities worldwide (QS University World Rankings 2016/17), with a world-class reputation for the quality of teaching, research and links to business, and is a major employer locally with over 4000 academic and support staff across the three main campus locations.

High tech hub on the riverside
Careful restoration of historic buildings

The conversion of these buildings on London Road are being carried out in a careful and considered fashion.

Many features of the original properties have been retained and enhanced to offer a blend of classic and contemporary. Front doors and entrance halls remain, staircases and balustrades refurbished and fireplaces and cornice detailing restored as the historic fabric of the building is maintained.

A return to former glory.

Particular consideration has been made to the use of sympathetic materials where possible and modern technologies employed with regard to sound and heat insulation using the latest techniques. The retention of historic features together with further enhancements provided during this restoration project have repositioned these buildings back to their former glory dominating this prime position on London Road.
Traditional style with a modern twist

At St Laurence’s Hall, you will know that you are living in a classic building. The imposing frontage, impressive entrances and traditional architectural features of this Grade II listed building all demonstrate a classic look which engenders pride and comfort. However, there’s much more than this. These are homes for the 21st Century and the way we live today. Clever use of space, considered materials and a high specification are all on hand to create a stylish modern lifestyle.

High ceilings and restored windows deliver rooms bathed with daylight while modern kitchens and bathrooms boast ‘A-rated’ energy-efficient appliances and contemporary fixtures and fittings throughout.

Photography shows indicative interiors from St Mary’s Hall phase of this development.
St Laurence’s Hall comprises a total of 8 luxury two bedroom apartments.

The properties are split across four floors, with three properties per floor from the lower ground floor to the second floor.

The following pages indicate the location of properties across St Laurence’s Hall together with room dimensions. All properties are two bedroom and range from approximately 698 to 962 sq.ft in size.

Photography shows indicative interiors from the St Mary’s Hall phase of this development.
Plot 5  89.5 m² / 962 ft²
Living / Dining  3.66m x 4.46m (12'0” x 14'8”)
Kitchen  3.67m x 2.57m (12'1” x 8’5”)  
Study  1.76m x 2.96m (5’9” x 9’9”)
Bedroom 1  3.58m x 4.39m (11’10” x 14’5”)
Bedroom 2  3.60m x 2.57m (11’10” x 8’5”)

Plot 6  86.8 m² / 924 ft²
Living / Dining  3.80m x 4.46m (12’6” x 14’8”)
Kitchen  3.56m x 2.57m (11’8” x 8’5”)
Bedroom 1  3.79m x 4.29m (12’5” x 14’5”)
Bedroom 2  3.47m x 2.57m (11’5” x 8’5”)

Plot 7  68.4 m² / 736 ft²
Living / Dining  3.06m x 4.50m (10’1” x 14’9”)
Kitchen  3.13m x 2.33m (10’3” x 7’8”)
Bedroom 1  4.92m x 4.14m (16’2” x 13’7”)
Bedroom 2  2.96m x 3.16m (9’8” x 10’4”)

Plot 8  64.9 m² / 698 ft²
Living / Dining  4.91m x 4.14m* (16’1” x 13’7”*)
Kitchen  3.08m x 2.16m (10’1” x 7’1”)
Bedroom 1  2.95m x 4.48m (9’8” x 14’9”)
Bedroom 2  2.92m x 3.18m (9’7” x 10’5”)

* Denotes reduced head height or exposed beams

** Dimensions: maximum dimensions
Thomas Homes

The name behind sensitive high quality developments

Established in 1974, Thomas Homes is one of the largest privately owned residential property developers in the south of England.

Thomas Homes specialises in building in sensitive locations - projects where design and quality are the major consideration. With an appetite for developments that demand an imaginative, holistic and sympathetic approach, the company’s ambitious schemes to date demonstrate a legacy of success.

Homes with identity and character.

There is no standard Thomas Homes’ design; projects take inspiration from each location and the surrounding architecture to create individual dwellings with identity and character.

Direct communication, transparent development goals and a passion for community engagement and collaboration have not gone unnoticed. By securing stakeholders’ confidence and trust, the team has enjoyed the freedom to realise some of the UK’s largest and most challenging residential, commercial and mixed-use schemes.
Want to learn more about St Laurence’s Hall?
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