Home of the week

From Death on the Nile to living on the Thames: David Suchet's riverside flat is for sale

David Suchet is no stranger to waterway adventures. As Hercule Poirot, he solved mysteries in Agatha Christie's *Death on the Nile* and *Dead Man's Folly*. So it's easy to see why the 75-year-old Bafta nominee and Emmy winner fell for St Katharine Docks, minutes from the Tower of London and the City.

Suchet and his actress wife, Sheila Ferris, started their life together on a narrowboat in 1974. While Suchet was a member of the Royal Shakespeare Company they commuted on the boat from Stratford-upon-Avon to London for 13 years. "We were like snails with our home on our backs," he says.

They settled in a family home in Pinner, but frequently returned to the water. In 2001 they moored at St Katharine Docks in their renovated Dutch barge, Leonie, using it as a base to visit canals and parts of the Thames. Three years later they discovered grade II listed Ivory House, a 19th-century converted warehouse overlooking the dock. They bought a flat as an investment and rented it out.

From Leonie's deck one day Ferris noticed a flat next to theirs on the second floor. "We bought it and got planning permission to knock both together into one big flat, after the sale of our family home," Suchet says. As you'd expect from the actor who inhabited the character of the fastidious Belgian detective for 25 years on TV, he carefully plotted the layout. Rejecting ideas from architects who wanted to knock down walls, the couple drew up a sectioned-off scheme. "I like closing a door to a room," Suchet says.

The rare, more than 3,000 sq ft, family home has original brick tile floors, exposed brickwork, high arched ceilings and a triple-aspect reception room facing the marina.

The principal bedroom and bathroom are on one side of the kitchen, and there are two other large bedrooms. A library/media room displays Suchet's many awards and two more bedrooms are kitted out as studies. The south-facing terrace has views of the water.

"After doing a heavy show, like *Long Day's Journey into Night* or *All My Sons*, I like to wind down here with a cup of tea," Suchet says.

A porter and 24-hour security at the dock mean there would be few crimes for Poirot to solve.

The flat is on the market for £4.5 million because the couple plan to move near the water outside Bath, close to their son Robert and his family. "There's more to life than work," Suchet says. "We want to spend more time with our two grandchildren."

However, he is considering taking his one-man show, *Poirot and More: A Retrospective*, to the provinces to help to regenerate theatres, and will debut as a director next year. And he's promoting a book of his photography, *Behind the Lens: My Life* (Constable, £25). Its commentary reveals why he still grieves for the eccentric Belgian detective. Perhaps his Poirot hasn't solved his last case after all.

Cheryl Markosky
roseandpartners.co.uk

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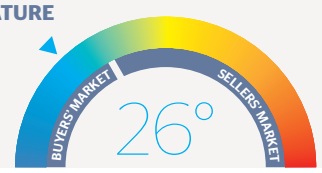
E1W The postcode in numbers

In this part of London **26%** of properties for sale are under offer, falling to **8%** of those costing £2 million or more

0% No change in buyer demand in the past year

£637,422 is the average house price

TAKING THE TEMPERATURE
BUYERS' MARKET
The hotter the market, the quicker and easier it should be to sell a home



Source: Prospect and Zoopla

What £1.5 million buys you in …

Compiled by Victoria Brzezinski
@vbrzezin

Lincolnshire

Highwall is a much-extended 1960s property with a self-contained two-storey annexe, arranged as a garage, store and fully soundproofed studio. Set in half an acre of gardens, the five-bedroom property has a triple-height open-plan living room with large expanses of windows. A wall of sliding glass in the open-plan dining area connects to the terrace. There's also a pantry, utility room plus a second dining space adjoining the kitchen. The house is on a private road, close to the Arboretum in central Lincoln .

Air pollution 9mcg/m³ particulate pollution annual average, 1mcg/m³ below the WHO guideline of 10mcg/m³.
Upside The design details, such as the wood-burner built into the kitchen wall.
Downside The premium attached to this kind of spec.
Contact themodernhouse.com

London NW10

Victorian grandeur meets modern convenience: this terraced house in a cul-de-sac has been given a top-to-toe makeover and comprises 2,248 sq ft living space over three storeys. The ground floor has two reception rooms with original floorboards and fireplaces with log-burners, plus the recent extension housing a kitchen/dining area with high-spec cabinets and a wine cooler. Over the two upper floors are five good-sized bedrooms, two further bathrooms and a small sixth bedroom. Willesden Junction Tube station is a ten-minute walk.

Air pollution 14.5mcg/m³, 4.5mcg/m³ above the WHO guideline of 10mcg/m³.
Upside New sash windows, central heating system and roof.
Downside Reduced ceiling heights on the top floor.
Contact cameronsstiff.co.uk

Movers&Shapers

Latest news from the world of property
@timesproperty

Computer says no

One in ten mortgage applicants have been rejected by lenders because they had previously used loan repayment holidays.

The personal finance specialist NerdWallet asked 500 mortgage holders about the horrors of getting their loan and found that 9 per cent had their application rejected without knowing why, while 10 per cent were refused because of old debt.

On average, consumers spend 22 hours researching their mortgage options and speak to just two lenders before applying; 48 per cent found the application process stressful, with 50 per cent calling upon the help of a professional mortgage broker.

"Our research shows that the mortgage market can be difficult to navigate, underlining the importance of thorough research and preparation," said John Ellmore, the director of operations at NerdWallet.

"Taking time to speak to multiple mortgage lenders and comparing different options online, for example, could save time and effort when it comes to the actual application, ensuring they do not pursue unrealistic or inappropriate options."

House of spies

Ever wanted to live in a Second World War spy base? One could be yours for £8.5 million (Emanuele Midolo writes).

The top secret listening post, *above*, in Arkley, north London, was set up by the MI6 to spy on German signals by the order of Winston Churchill. It was used to intercept illicit messages operated by enemy agents in Britain as well as transmissions from German U-boats.

Today, Rowley Ridge has been refurbished into a six-bedroom mansion spanning 11,000 sq ft. The house, on sale via Beauchamp Estates, is packed with security features that would make spies proud, including a panic room, CCTV cameras with remote monitoring and a biometric entry system. It also has a cinema, games room, gym, pool and spa. "I truly believe that Arkley is a leafy oasis, one of London's most exclusive enclaves," says Jeremy Gee, the managing director of Beauchamp Estates. "Arkley's hidden role as an MI6 base adds to the excitement and glamour of the secret services, spies and gadgets."

Reps for residents

A property developer has splashed out on a *Love Island* influencer to lure professionals with access to the Bank of Mum and Dad (Melissa York writes).

Bare-chested bro Eyal Booker has been hired to "curate" fitness workouts to motivate residents to be the "best version of themselves".

Residents at Avanton's £120 million Coda development in Battersea, southwest London, get free access to Booker's coaching platform, Empower by Eyal, with one-to-one fitness training, "wellbeing support" and nutrition advice.

This year the developer was one of the first in the UK to market its homes through the social media platform TikTok.

Could you do the eBay challenge?

If you thought furnishing your home was hard, try doing it just using stuff from eBay (Katrina Burroughs writes).

That's the challenge that the e-commerce giant has posed the interior designers 2 Lovely Gays (2LG).

Jordan Cluroe and Russell Whitehead, who are based in east London, were asked to style an entire London home, on a strict budget using only eBay.

The online auction platform has added thousands of items to its Home section. They include soft furnishings such as floral cushions, shaggy rugs, colourful sofas and beds.

2LG selected their favourite bargain buys and yesterday in Camden, north London, launched the first eBay Home. Check it out on Instagram @2lgstudio.

View the UK's most luxurious residential properties
MANSION GLOBAL
mansionglobal.com/london

Staffordshire

The owners of Highfields Farm have produced artisan goat's cheese from their herd of milking goats, sold through retailers including Neal's Yard Dairy. The 5.000 sq ft grade II listed Georgian farmhouse is set in just shy of 12 acres, including pasture paddocks, with several bridleways within easy reach.

It has double-glazed sash windows, a large kitchen with a double Belfast sink, three reception rooms and a cellar.

The top floor could be arranged as a separate two-bedroom flat with its own kitchen, bathroom and living room. The village of Clifton Campville is two miles away, while Tamworth is five miles to the south.

Air pollution 9.1mcg/m³, 0.9mcg/m³ below the WHO guideline of 10mcg/m³.
Upside Extensive outbuildings.
Downside You'll need a car.
Contact howkinsandharrison.co.uk

Portugal

This secluded villa lies in the Norte region of the Douro Valley, a Unesco world heritage site. While the area is best known as the birthplace of port, it has a growing reputation for red and white wine. This home has been designed to make the most of its sunny situation with 3,767 sq ft of accommodation including a living room with a balcony, kitchen/dining room and a self-contained guesthouse. The 3.75 acres of outside space includes organic vegetable gardens, terraces and an infinity pool overlooking the Douro River, as well as a barbecue and alfresco dining space. The best bit? The spa, sauna and hammam. It is a 75-minute drive or scenic rail journey from Porto.
Upside Those views, of course.
Downside It is isolated, and the twisty roads are not for the faint-hearted.
Contact christiesrealestate.com

Home of the week

From a schoolhouse to a gold star-worthy family home. By Rosemary Gallagher

With a rich history, sea views and a location close to some of the world's best golf courses, it's clear to see why Newburn School House in the East Neuk of Fife deserves a gold star. The original building dates from the 1630s when it was used as a school room. It was extended in the middle of the 19th century and a new space, which served as the Newburn village hall, was added in the 1930s.

Family connections drew the owners to the house near Upper Largo. One half of the couple, whose grandparents had lived for a time behind the school house, has fond memories of childhood holidays in the area. Since buying the property in 2007, the owners have transformed it into a modern home with eight bedrooms and a bunk room over three floors. And they have put the school room to good use, including as a yoga and exercise studio.

Working with Lorn Macneal Architects, based in Edinburgh, and local builders, the owners have created a comfortable and spacious home. "We had to make it work for a young family," they say. The original north-facing kitchen became a drawing room. They created a new kitchen and dining area in a part of the house that's flooded with light and they added height by digging down a couple of steps. The kitchen has neutral-coloured units, hand built by what was Murray & Murray in Fife, and leads on to a terrace for entertaining.

The former village hall wasn't attached to the house when the owners bought it, so they integrated it and installed a wall to form two rooms. On the second floor they created more space. "We opened up and connected separate storage spaces to create three bedrooms, a bathroom and a huge attic. The view from up there is amazing," explains the owner.

The entrance hall has a welcoming fireplace, neutral walls and chairs covered in a light plaid pattern from Colefax & Fowler. The drawing room has green leaf-patterned wallpaper inspired by the owners' stay at Babington House in Somerset and Zimmer & Rohde fabric. In the study they chose Harlequin wallpaper with an exotic theme as a reminder of the many countries they have visited. There is Thibaut umbrella paper to give a beachy look to a first-floor bathroom and a striped pattern from Jane Churchill in the twin bedroom. The owners say: "We decided to keep it bright in the modern spaces, but pushed the boundaries a little in the more historic rooms."

As well as an enclosed garden, the house has land across the road with an orchard and pavilion. And the East Neuk — under an hour's drive from Edinburgh — has lots to offer, including water sports, the renowned Ship Inn in nearby Elie, good schools and golf courses.

With the owners' family growing up, they have decided to sell. "It's been fantastic here with the children. We'll miss the family time and the beach walks," they say.

rettie.co.uk

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What £1.5 million buys you in …

Compiled by Victoria Brzezinski and Rosemary Gallagher
@vbrzezin, @Rosie_Gall

Edinburgh

This grand Victorian five-bedroom home is in the heart of Edinburgh's sought after Morningside, with its restaurants, bars and coffee shops. The house has period features, including a welcoming hallway with original floor tiles and a winding staircase. The rooms are spacious with high corniced ceilings, traditional fireplaces and large windows with shutters. It has been decorated in bright shades and the country-style kitchen has wooden units and a green Aga. Families will love the large back garden with its vegetable patch and raised terrace.

Air pollution 6.8mcg/m³ particulate pollution annual average, 3.2mcg/m³ below the WHO guideline of 10mcg/m³.
Upside Private garage.
Downside The decor might not appeal to everyone.
Contact rettie.co.uk

Perthshire

If you have always wanted your own country pile, this Perthshire lodge with stunning views over Loch Rannoch might just be up your street — well country lane actually. Camusericht Lodge, about nine miles from the village of Kinloch Rannoch, dates back to the 1850s and is rich in period features, including open fireplaces. The hunting lodge is vast — it has four reception rooms, nine bedrooms, eight bathrooms, and an indoor pool. There's also a coach house and Camusericht Cottage in the estate that covers more than 66 acres. There's a mainland railway and sleeper connection to London from Rannoch station seven miles away.

Air pollution 3.8mcg/m³, 6.2mcg/m³ below the WHO guideline of 10mcg/m³.
Upside Great area for outdoor pursuits.
Downside Lots of upkeep required.
Contact knightfrank.co.uk

Brief encounter
Ask the expert

Q I live in the countryside. With Covid-19 restrictions easing, I am worried about people coming on to my land. Since this is private property, can I restrict access?

A The pandemic has encouraged people outdoors and it is likely that greater freedom and better weather will lead to more visitors in the countryside over the coming months. The Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 introduced a right of responsible access for all — the "right to roam" — with the Scottish Outdoor Access Code detailing what amounts to responsible access. That right to roam continues to apply and the guidance on complying with the code encourages welcoming the public rather than restricting access.

Due to the pandemic, responsible exercise of access rights involves maintaining physical distancing and observing hygiene measures to prevent the virus spreading. Those taking access should therefore stay two metres apart from people and avoid busy times and places. Contact with surfaces should also be avoided where possible — for example, by taking a route that does not require gates to be opened.

In normal times the Outdoor Access Code requires the public to behave responsibly by removing any litter, staying on paths to avoid damaging crops, and keeping dogs in sight and under control. Additionally, those exercising access must follow reasonable requests to avoid particular areas such as farmyards (where access rights do not apply unless there is a core path or right of way), fields with pregnant or young livestock, and areas where land management operations are taking place, such as timber harvesting.

Steps that landowners can take to assist include fastening gates open where possible to minimise handling, maintaining well-used routes, and putting up helpful signs to alert people and suggest alternative routes where required.

A temporary sign is available at outdooraccess-scotland.scot if needed, to remind people about good practice in relation to Covid.

If in doubt about your rights as a landowner, speak to a lawyer about your particular circumstances.

Ros James is a senior solicitor in real estate at Brodies

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