

WHY MOVE TO SURREY? WE SAY WHY NOT?

As one of the UK's prettiest and most charming counties, within easy commuting distance to London, and with first-rate business and leisure amenities, Surrey is catching the eye of the ex-pat community for all the right reasons. If you're about to arrange a re-location to the capital, read our quick guide to what the county has to offer and you may find yourself changing your mind.



Putting Surrey on the Map

Surrey is one of England's so-called 'Home Counties', which means it borders London, just to the south west. It encompasses an area of 642 square miles and is home to a population of 1.1 million people. The county town is Guildford, although the county council has its administrative offices in Kingston upon Thames in the north east, which is actually a part of Greater London.

Beyond the environs of London's sprawling suburbs, Surrey is characterised by the beautiful rolling countryside of the North Downs, a chalk ridge that acts as the spine of the county, running from west to east, just south of the Thames basin. Most of the county is in the Green Belt so new building is strictly limited and it is actually the most wooded county in England. Box Hill represents the UK's oldest area of untouched woodland and the county is also celebrated for its beautiful stretches of sandy lowland heath which are a riot of purple, gold and brown when the heather and gorse are in bloom.

Fantastic for Families

Apart from being an area of great natural beauty in easy proximity to London, what else does Surrey have to offer? Listed below are just a few of the benefits that come from choosing this area as a family base.



- Excellent transport links – fast trains up to London make commuting quick and easy, with most Surrey towns being within 40 minutes of Victoria or Waterloo stations. There is also a good major road network and the M25 corridor has seen the development of several business centres within the county that are becoming attractive locations for international headquarters. In addition, the region is well positioned for both Heathrow and Gatwick airports, of particular importance for ex-pat business travellers.

- A wide range of accommodation choices. While there are parts of Surrey that can give central London a run for its money in terms of luxury and rental prices, there are other areas of the county that offer great value for money. Here householders are far more likely to get a decent sized garden and a spacious interior, and generally in a more attractive location.
- Not many people want to bring up their children in the inner city. Surrey offers a rural alternative, with pretty historic towns, excellent leisure amenities and plenty of rolling wooded countryside. There are a number of superb golf courses and sports clubs, as well as unique attractions including Windsor Castle and Ascot Racecourse.
- Transferees with children will be lured by the excellent educational opportunities. As well as boasting some of the best state schools in the country, Surrey has more than 100 independent schools, including eight international schools – see the paragraph below.
- Surrey has championship golf courses at Wentworth, Walton Heath and Sunningdale and numerous excellent members' clubs.

The Rental Market in Surrey

As mortgages have become harder to come by and the stock of social housing has diminished, demand in the UK rental market has soared, and nowhere more so than in London and the South East. This has meant that the rental prices for the most desirable properties throughout Surrey have remained high as the rental market has experienced a welcome resurgence.



More top-end rental properties have recently become available as landlords try to take advantage of a good return on their capital, meaning that for ex-pats there is a wider choice at the high end of the market, particularly in the area of family homes. Transferees will find a varied style of property to view – from luxury mansions to Victorian cottages, Edwardian family houses to modern masterpieces – and there are a number of private roads and estates that offer added security. But desirable, well-located properties are snapped up quickly, so it really pays to put a relocation expert with local knowledge in charge of your property search. They will be able to quickly assess whether a property is suitable or not and they generally have a good nose for sniffing out a deal.

International Schools in Surrey

One of the reasons why so many ex-pats are attracted to Surrey's green and leafy environs is because of its wealth of international schools. These are attractive to transferees as they allow pupils to study the International Baccalaureate, thus offering a continuity of education with their own home country and resulting in a qualification that is recognised by universities all over the world.



Outside the centre of London, international schools are generally few and far between, but Surrey boasts eight, located in Cobham, Egham, Box Hill, Kingston Upon Thames, Thorpe Village and Woking.



- ACS Cobham – serves ages 2-18 and offers the International Baccalaureate and an American curriculum. The school is set on 128 acres with a modern campus and excellent sporting facilities that include six tennis courts, playing fields, a golf course and a 25-metre swimming pool.
- ACS Egham – sister school to ACS Cobham, serving a similar age range and offering all three of the International Baccalaureate programmes. 600 students are taught on a 20-acre campus that features computer labs, libraries, sports fields, a new Visual Arts & Design Technology Centre and a state-of-the-art science wing.
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- Marymount International School – located in Kingston upon Thames, this Roman Catholic girls' school was established in 1955 to meet the educational needs of international families. Catering for girls from 11-18, the school has a strong academic focus and offers both day and boarding places.
- Box Hill School – in one of the most beautiful parts of Surrey, this co-ed boarding and day school educates 11-18 year olds and is a member of the Round Square established by Gordonstoun-founder Kurt Hahn, offering a strong education and fantastic extra-curricular activities.

- Notre Dame School – this independent Roman Catholic day school for girls is set in 17 acres of beautiful parkland at Cobham and is part of an educational organisation founded in Bordeaux in the 17th century.
- Tasis - The American School in England – taking students from three years to 19, this school offers an American and international college preparatory curriculum on a campus of Georgian mansions, 17th century cottages and new purpose-built facilities. It is located in Thorpe Village.
- International School of London Surrey – located in Woking, ISLS teaches the International Baccalaureate to children of all nationalities and offers a Mother Tongue programme for children to keep in touch with their roots.
- Yehudi Menuhin School – established in Cobham by the world-famous violinist in 1963 to create the ideal conditions for musically gifted children to develop their potential.

Some of the Jewels in Surrey's Crown

Surrey is a county with a wonderful balance – beautiful countryside versus historic towns; proximity to London yet remote from the city; ancient woodlands versus 21st century business parks; elegant shopping and fine dining or amusement parks and golf courses. There really is something for everyone and there are more than 20 towns, with populations ranging from 10,000 to 150,000, to choose from for your relocation.

So where's the best place to live? It all depends on what you're looking for... so we've put together a mini-guide to some of Surrey's most popular relocation locations.

- Cobham Home to a large ex-pat community due to the presence of a number of international schools, Cobham is one of Surrey's most desirable towns. The recent arrival of Chelsea Football Club's training ground has led to an influx of wealthy footballers, and a subsequent rise in property prices, but the area offers some of the most luxurious properties to be found outside London. The High Street offers elegant and eclectic shopping, while there is a good selection of first-class restaurants. There is also an International Community Church, linked to the American Church in London.
- Egham 20 miles south west of London on the banks of the Thames, this pretty village can trace its history back to 666AD and is mentioned in the Domesday Book. The town centre is pedestrianised and there is a good selection of pubs and restaurants. Property ranges from Victorian semi-detached houses near the centre to cottages and large country houses round about. Windsor Great Park is a wonderful nearby attraction.
- Wentworth and Virginia Water Named after the lake in Windsor Great Park, Virginia Water is one of Surrey's most desirable villages. The nearby private Wentworth estate, with its famous golf course, was developed in the 1920s to allow for spacious houses with large gardens, and remains one of the UK's most exclusive residential areas.

- **Woking** This is Surrey's second largest town, with a bright modern centre, and it is home to the International School of London Surrey. Less than half an hour by train from London, Woking is a popular commuter town with a choice of Victorian, 1930s and 1950s houses. Hook Heath and the Hockering are the most desirable local areas.
- **Weybridge** Best known for the ultra-exclusive St George's Hill Estate set in 50 acres of private woodland, Weybridge offers plenty of spacious houses along private roads and new luxury developments. There are number of multi-national corporations head-quartered here, due to the nearby international schools and proximity to Heathrow. There are also superb health clubs, excellent golf courses and a cosmopolitan range of shops, pubs and restaurants.

Surrey – Average Rents June 2011

Cobham

Average rents in Cobham are £1,400/month for a two bedroom property, £1,600/month for a three bedroom property, £3,200/month for four bedrooms and £6,100 for five bedrooms.

Egham

Average rents in Egham are £1,100/month for a two bedroom property, £1,300/month for a three bedroom property, £2,500/month for four bedrooms and £5,300 for five bedrooms.

Virginia Water

Average rents in Virginia Water are £1,300/month for a two bedroom property, £2,400/month for a three bedroom property, £7,000/month for four bedrooms and £12,800 for five bedrooms.

Woking

Average rents in Woking are £1,000/month for a two bedroom property, £1,200/month for a three bedroom property, £2,000/month for four bedrooms and £3,800 for five bedrooms.

Weybridge

Average rents in Weybridge are £1,200/month for a two bedroom property, £2,200/month for a three bedroom property, £3,000/month for four bedrooms and £5,800 for five bedrooms.

Relocating to Surrey

With so much on offer in Surrey, it can be hard to decide which end of the county to start looking. Where will you find a house that matches the budget, transport needs, educational requirements and aspirations of your transferee and his family? Local knowledge goes a long way in getting this equation right, so the first thing to do is to find a relocation agent who can help you with the process from start to finish.

At Saunders 1865 our international team of destination specialists can help you to arrange smooth, efficient and stress free relocations to Surrey, London and other parts of the UK. Our services include home finding assistance, school finding, lease negotiations, temporary accommodation, move management and immigration assistance. Don't hesitate to contact us to find out how we can help you.

For information about our Full Rental Finding and Schooling Programs or any of our other programs, please enquire using this [Contact Form](#) .

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