



The Investor View

West Putney
Summer 2014



Douglas
& Gordon

Good to know.

Introduction

Anyone who owns a property in London is a property investor and it's often useful to take an investor's view of the market before making big decisions. To produce this report we've worked closely with the experts at D&G Asset Management, a company we co-founded in 2005. They invest in London residential property all the time – so are constantly analysing different areas, and assets within those areas, seeking to maximise returns.

As well as publicly available sources, we've used proprietary data that we've been capturing since 1996, to help us make decisions and advise our clients. D&GAM has helped us focus on the data that counts, and we think the results make fascinating reading.

How an investor looks at the market

Residential property investors use two key measures to assess property – the capital value and the net

Property Values

Steady growth in Q1 across all unit sizes and this trend is set to continue.

Q1 Performance

The chart compares the Q1 performance of two bedroom flats, three bedroom houses and four bedroom houses in West Putney against their performance over the last 12 month and five year periods.

During the last year, the common theme across our South West London offices has been of flats outperforming houses. Smaller unit sizes have performed better than in preceding years due to the fact that the credit cycle has turned and mortgage finance improved. West Putney however, is proving to be an exception.

There is a clear arbitrage between houses in neighbouring Fulham and West Putney driven by the lower £ per square foot. The substantial deposits from purchasers are also a clear sign that much of the buying is being driven by cash redeployed out of Central London properties. Demand for larger houses in West Putney has remained strong in Q1 with many properties being sold via sealed bids.

Outlook

We expect investors to continue to target West Putney over the coming months, as there appears to be value relative to other neighbouring areas.

We believe that as the credit cycle unfolds, flats will continue to perform well. During Q1 2014, house prices in some areas closer to Prime Central London slowed. Our prediction for West Putney however, is that demand for houses will persist as they offer good value on a £ per square foot basis.

West Putney Real Annualised Property Values

	Real Annualised Growth		
	Apr 2009 - Apr 2014	Apr 2013 - Apr 2014	Q1 2014
2 Bed Flat	58.54%	18.18%	4.00%
3 Bed House	50.68%	15.79%	0%
4 Bed House	85.19%	20.00%	7.14%

Source: D&G proprietary data, ONS

rental yield (the annual rent, less expenses, divided by the property's capital value).

Both of these measures are important, and are influenced by a number of factors including: supply of new properties, infrastructure projects, demographics of the area, the economy (in particular, interest and tax rates) and the wider geopolitical picture. It's the interplay of these factors that determines investment returns and makes property investment decisions so interesting.

The importance of market cycles

Successful investors will always maintain a keen awareness of market cycles and long term trends. It is therefore important to look at the recent growth trends of capital and rental values in West Putney when managing your property assets.

We are recommending investors look at the year when property values last peaked (2007) and treat this as the start of the most recent cycle.

In Q1, rental values slowed, however indications suggest a more positive end to the year.

Rental Growth & Yield

Q1 performance and outlook

Over the course of this lettings cycle, rents in Putney have risen across all unit sizes. For example, between 2008 and the end of 2013, nominal rents rose between 11% for one bedroom flats and 56% for large houses.

Rental values increased during the period of tight credit (2008-2012) as frustrated buyers were forced to rent. As credit has eased and confidence has returned so tenants have become owner/occupiers, leading to capital values rising and rents stabilising or even falling.

Over the same period, employees/tenants experienced salaries stagnating in real terms meaning affordability was stretched. With earnings in the City now picking up and a general improvement in outlook, we believe that rents in Putney will start to rise. Data from our offices in Prime Central London suggest this is already underway.

Implications

Putney remains popular with tenants, but landlords must continue to invest in their properties to ensure tenants stay and/or pay more rent. "Accidental landlords" who during 2008-2012 rented properties out rather than sell, and are not keen to invest capital into their properties, might choose to take advantage of a strong sales market and sell.

Landlords must appreciate that those still opting to rent have more property to choose from and will be more demanding than a few years ago.

Note: When renting out a property, investors will look at current rental yield, (see below) however they also need to take a view on how much rents will grow. It's this "rental growth" that maintains real income and yield over time.

Putney Nominal Rental Growth

	Dec 2008 - Dec 2013	Q1 2014
1 Bed Flat	11.11%	0%
2 Bed Flat	14.29%	0%
3 Bed House	20.00%	0%
4 Bed House	55.56%	0%

Source: D&G proprietary data

Current Rental Yields March 2014

One Bed Flats	3.7% - 5.0%
Two Bed Flats	3.5% - 4.8%
Three Bed Houses	2.6% - 4.3%
Four Bed Houses	2.6% - 4.3%
10 Yr UK Gilt Yield	2.7%
FTSE All Sh Yield	3.45%
UK Base Rate	0.5%

Never has the difference between London and regional property prices been so great.

Every Spring we co-host the 'Move to the Country Show' with The London Office. The show is held in Battersea and gives our clients and members of the public an opportunity to meet local independent estate agents from across our UK network.

The show is an important date in our calendar as every year a proportion of our vendors sell up and leave London.

For many, the timing of that move involves a number of practical considerations such as schooling and space.

For others, it is an important investment decision where a London property is sold and part of the money deployed into a regional retirement property. The remainder often forms part of a pension pot, so the timing of the move is crucial.

Although we remain positive about London prices over the long term, the current relative gap between London and regional property prices may well provide an opportunity for those looking to move out of London and top up their savings/pension pots.

Regional property prices relative to London property prices



Source: ONS average property prices.

West Putney key facts & figures

Here are the key facts and figures anyone investing in the property market needs at their fingertips.

Nominal Rental Income Growth to Dec 2013				
	2013	2 years	4 years	
1 Bed Flats	-5%	-8%	7%	
2 Bed Flats	0%	0%	7%	
3 Bed Houses	-23%	-25%	0%	
4 Bed Houses	-13%	-19%	17%	

Nominal Capital Returns to Dec 2013				
	2013	2 years	4 years	
1 Bed Flats	29%	38%	50%	
2 Bed Flats	19%	45%	39%	
3 Bed Houses	22%	16%	29%	
4 Bed Houses	27%	27%	40%	

Other Assets Capital Returns to Dec 2013				
	2013	2 years	4 years	
Nationwide HPI*	8%	7%	8%	
Halifax HPI*	6%	8%	2%	
FTSE100	14%	21%	25%	
RPI	3%	6%	16%	

*House Price Index

**West Putney
2014
Our view**

- Area to start to catch up adjoining neighbourhoods
- Capital values: Flats & houses to produce similar capital returns
- Rents to slowly pick up • Credit easing

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