

THE MODERN HOUSE



Barbican, London EC2
Sold

Thomas More House II

This immaculate Type 21 apartment is positioned in Thomas More House, which runs along the southern side of Chamberlain, Powell and Bon's iconic Barbican estate. The two-bedroom apartment is configured between two balconies; the living room looks directly to St Paul's Cathedral, while the bedrooms face inwards over the peaceful Barbican gardens. It retains many original features, including the kitchen, a WC with a Barbican sink and wall light, balcony planters and all switches and fittings. The apartment has recently been sensitively restored by Beasley Dickson Architects, introducing several contemporary additions such as new cork floors and lighting solutions. The flow of light is exceptional throughout, ensuring the apartment feels at once bright and welcoming.

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The Architect

In 1951 the City of London ran a competition for architects to submit plans for a scheme in order to replace buildings destroyed by a night of bombing in December 1940. The proposal was to be called the Golden Lane Estate. Peter Chamberlin, Geoffrey Powell and Christoph Bon all submitted plans and agreed that if one of their practices won, they would form a partnership and work together on the project. Powell won the competition, and thus Chamberlin, Powell & Bon was formed in 1952. After their success with the Golden Lane Estate, the firm was asked to design the Barbican Estate, now London's most iconic brutalist complex. For more information, see the History section below.

The Tour

Running along the south of the residents' garden, with the eastern end abutting Mountjoy House, Thomas More has seven storeys of apartments above podium level and three below. This apartment is positioned on the 6th floor above podium level, to which there is both lift and stair access.

Internally, accommodation is configured between two balconies. The south-facing balcony runs the width of the living/dining room, looking out over the city directly at St Paul's Cathedral. The other faces north and is accessed via the bedroom; it looks over Thomas More Gardens, the largest and most leafy of the Barbican's communal spaces. The window frames have been thoughtfully stripped back and lacquered to expose the original wood, in keeping with the Barbican's original design. Pale cream cork flooring runs throughout, a sensitive contemporary addition that brings further texture to the palette. The internal glazed panels were recently restored to overlook the sculptural communal stairs, providing sightlines from deep inside the apartment.

The apartment retains its original kitchen, characterised by stainless steel worktops, electric ceramic hobs, white cabinetry with cutout handles in the glass fronts, and a cutout section of the wall that functions as a hatch which opens the space to the living/dining room. A new built-in oven has been installed to suit the original kitchen, and in-built appliances include a fridge, washing machine and dishwasher.

Both bedrooms are positioned on the northern aspect of the apartment, ensuring they are supremely tranquil spaces. Again, cork flooring has been introduced underfoot, adding a warmth to the material palette, while light floods in through large sheets of glass that frame views towards the Barbican itself. The main bedroom has direct access to the balcony. Both bedrooms have new built-in wardrobes for storage, in keeping with the original Barbican design. Curtains are discretely hung on ceiling-mounted curtain tracks to close off the full-height glazing.

The WC retains its iconic Barbican sink. The separate shower room has a large walk-in shower and tiled floor.

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Outdoor Space

The apartment has balconies on both aspects, one with views towards St Paul's and the other looking inwards over the Barbican itself.

One of the principal intents of the original plan of the Barbican was to provide an enclosed sanctuary for the estate's residents. In the estate, both public and private outdoor spaces are concentrated centrally, and residents have access to a number of both private and public gardens.

The principal private gardens extend to approximately two and a half acres and are sited at the eastern and western ends of the Barbican lake, extending to over one and a half acres. These gardens are laid out in a naturalistic manner with expansive lawns punctuated by the cover of foliage from various species of mature trees and surrounded by rich and textural borders planted with both native and exotic species. This whole ensemble makes for a tranquil and secluded retreat in the heart of the city, and this resource is often seen as one of the most unexpected but cherished aspects of life in the Barbican.

There are dedicated areas for children's play along with various architectural follies, including a brutalist waterfall and a sunken garden and seating area set within the lake.

The Area

The Barbican has many public facilities available to residents within the Arts Centre, with its theatre, art gallery, concert venue, cinemas, and several bars and cafes. The City of London has recently appointed Allies and Morrison Architects and Asif Khan Studio to deliver a multi-million-pound renewal of the Barbican Centre. The Centre forms a key part of the 'Culture Mile', the City of London's cultural district stretching from Farringdon to Moorgate. The 'Cultural Mile' includes the Guildhall School of Music & Drama, the London Symphony Orchestra and the Museum of London. It provides a vibrant and creative area with a diverse and international cultural program of concerts, events, and performances.

The apartment is near an excellent selection of pubs and restaurants, including the nearby Smithfield Market, St. John, Luca, The Quality Chop House, and the Exmouth Market. Whitecross Street also has a food market every weekday. St Paul's, the River Thames, the South Bank and Tate Modern are all close by.

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Transport links are excellent, with Underground stations at nearby Barbican (Circle, Hammersmith & City and Metropolitan Lines), Old Street (Northern Line), Farringdon (Circle, Hammersmith & City, and Metropolitan Lines, plus Thameslink services to Gatwick Airport, Brighton and Bedford) and Moorgate (Northern, Hammersmith & City, Circle and Metropolitan Lines). The Elizabeth Line has recently commenced service from Farringdon. This station now offers high-speed transit across the East-West axis of London, extending out to Heathrow (with a direct service from Farringdon to Heathrow scheduled to start in Spring 2023).

Tenure: Leasehold Lease Length: approx. 83 years remaining
Service Charge: approx. £6,000 per annum
Council Tax Band: E

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About

The Modern House is an estate agency that helps people live in more thoughtful and beautiful ways. We believe in design as a powerful force for good. Inspired by the principles of modernism, we represent design-led homes across the UK which celebrate light, space and a truth to materials. Esquire credits The Modern House with “rewriting the rulebook on estate agency” and GQ voted us “one of the best things in the world”.