

THE MODERN HOUSE



Barbican, London EC2
Sold

Shakespeare Tower II

This rare Type 8A apartment lies on the first floor of Shakespeare Tower, the quietest and most peaceful tower within the iconic Barbican Estate. Extending over 1,100 sq ft, the apartment has been subject to a considered renovation in recent years, using a palette that combines stripped-back concrete with muted natural tones, reflecting the architect's original design. From the open-plan living area lies a spacious east-facing terrace, with a conjoining balcony that runs the length of the apartment, ensuring plenty of sunlight throughout the day.

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The Architect

In 1951 the City of London ran a competition for architects to submit plans for a scheme 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 arguably London's most iconic brutalist complex.

The Building

Shakespeare Tower is one of three within The Barbican estate, along with Cromwell and Lauderdale. Once one of the tallest residential towers in Europe, it occupies a central position away from the surrounding road, to the west of Barbican Art Centre. Below penthouse level, each floor contains three flats and three lifts, ordered via a central panel and arranged around a triangular lobby area with vivid orange carpet underfoot. The building is characterised by its polygonal shape, upswept balconies and jagged swept tops. Pevsner describes these towers as 'unmistakable silhouettes prominent in long views'.

The Tour

Entrance is via a raised walkway, either from the south or north podium to a smart communal lobby area with a part-time concierge. Something of a time-warped, these areas are largely in original condition due to the estate's Grade II-listing status. A lift ascends to the first floor and the apartment's front door.

The sensical layout of the apartment sees the main west-facing living areas, kitchen and bedrooms run along the front of the plan, with the utility room and bathrooms arranged parallel. A hallway seamlessly connects the interior spaces, and a carefully considered colour and material palette has been used in harmony with the home's original features. Plexwood birch ply floorboards from Holland, flow underfoot.

The main living and kitchen area is a large, open space, illuminated by light that streams in through the vast sliding timber windows – with their original handles – that open onto the terrace. A contemporary kitchen extends the length of the room with warm beige grey Valchromat cabinetry and carefully exposed, polished concrete walls behind. The bespoke stainless steel worktop is 6m in length, with a raised section for power sockets and a strip of LED lighting, which illuminates the concrete behind.

The current owners have reconfigured the internal plan by removing the original wall between the kitchen and living spaces, allowing these rooms to seamlessly flow into one another.



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The apartment has three bedrooms, one of which has been arranged as a second living area at the rear. Both bedrooms contain an abundance of storage in the form of sleek built-in wardrobes and doors that open directly onto the balcony. The rear living area has been executed with a monochrome palette: a versatile space, it can easily be configured into a study. Similar to the living area, large sliding doors open directly onto the balcony from here.

The bathrooms have been finished to an impeccable standard with inviting pops of colour; slate-coloured ceramic tiles underfoot and oblong white tiles echo the original design ethos of the building. Next to the front door is a useful cloakroom utility room with plenty of storage space.

Outdoor Space

The large east-facing terrace can be accessed via sliding glazed doors from the living area, creating a wonderful sense of extension to the internal plan, and with plenty of room for planting or a table and chairs. There is also a balcony, which runs the length of the apartment, accessible via all three bedrooms. Barbican residents have access to numerous sprawling communal gardens throughout the estate. There are sunken gardens with a raised podium and several expansive lawned areas with playgrounds.

The Area

The Barbican has a wealth of public facilities available to residents within the Arts Centre, with its theatre, art gallery, music venue, cinema, and several bars and cafes.

The apartment is near an excellent selection of pubs and restaurants, including the nearby Smithfield Market, St. John, Luca, The Quality Chop House, in addition, 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.

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) and Moorgate (Northern, Hammersmith & City, Circle and Metropolitan Lines). On the imminent opening of the Elizabeth Line, Farringdon will become one of the main Crossrail stations.

Tenure: Leasehold Lease Length: approx. 174 Service Charge: approx. £8000 Ground Rent: approx. Peppercorn Council Tax Band: G

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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”.