

LOCAL AREA GUIDE
Allington



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Allington is a modern little residential Kentish village-cum-town with a population of about seven thousand (in 2015). Officially, it's part of the town of Maidstone.

The village is in a charming setting alongside the winding River Medway that flows from around Tonbridge out into the Thames Estuary at Sheerness.

Maidstone is the largest town in Kent, the county fondly known as the Garden of England for its prowess in fruit-growing and gardening hops.

It's an idyllic area with beautiful countryside and a river running through it, but another huge attraction is its proximity to London, the south-east coast of England, and the rest of Europe across the English Channel. Four motorways are within a few miles of the town.

Allington has an old stone-built moated castle, aptly named Allington Castle, as its centrepiece.

In the Second World War, the skies above Maidstone were arguably the centre stage in the great Battle of Britain of 1940.



"King Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn dined with Sir Thomas Wyatt in the Great Hall at Allington Castle in around 1530."

History of Allington

It's thought that Allington was originally farmland around Allington Castle. The latter was built sometime in the 12th century as a fortification during a rebellion against royalists. When the royalists won, it was torn down and replaced with a manor house which was then fortified gradually over the next couple of centuries. It's a funny old world, how history is in the habit of repeating itself!

This second fort was seized by Queen Mary sometime in the 16th century, after which it lay in near ruins until the early 20th century when the Carmelite friars and nuns moved in. It then became a private residence around the second millennium. It's now a Grade I listed building - and very attractive it is, too.

So, what was the farmland around the castle used for through the ages? Well, it was an important agricultural area with a population of about 50 in the mid 19th century. It would have helped feed the castle's inhabitants, but also the growing area of Maidstone nearby and maybe Chatham to the north. The River Medway would have made this possible, connecting all three settlements.

Nowadays, Allington is a relatively new part of the outward spread of Maidstone.



"Monty Python's Graham Chapman died at Maidstone Hospital on the 4th October 1989, the eve of the group's 20th anniversary of their British TV debut. Fellow comedian and friend Terry Jones called it "the worst case of party-pooing in all history"."

Property Types in Allington

People like to live in Allington not just because it's beside a lovely river with locks and all the excitement that goes with them, but the housing quality is good and generally modern. Allington is also a convenient and well-connected location by both road and rail for commuting into Maidstone centre, Chatham to the north, Sevenoaks to the west and London to the north-west. In addition, there's that beautiful castle, too!

Generally, property in Allington is much sought after. Most property is relatively modern, as one would expect in a 'new town'. It's perfect for young families, with easy access to the surrounding Kent countryside.

The main postcode in Allington is ME16 where the average value of property at the time of writing is around £320,000. Detached houses average just under £500,000, semi-detached properties around £350,000, terraced houses about £270,000 and flats are in the region of £190,000.

Areas with high-end property values include Farleigh Lane, North Pole Road, Queen's Avenue and Somerfield Road.

*All information correct as of December 2021



"There is a 2,700-year-old mummy of an Egyptian woman named Ta-Kush, in Maidstone Museum's Egyptian Collection."

Schools and Colleges in and Around Allington

There are many Ofsted-rated 'Good' pre-schools, primary and secondary schools in and around Allington. Independent schools and further education establishments are also well represented, the main draws of the latter being North Kent College and the University of Kent.

Nursery & Pre-Schools

Barming Primary School - Ofsted Good
Greenfields Community Primary School - Ofsted Good
Five Acre Wood School (Special) - Ofsted Outstanding
Kings Hill School Primary and Nursery (West Malling) - Ofsted Good
Wayfield Primary School (Chatham), Ofsted - Good

Primary Schools

Molehill Primary Academy - Ofsted Good
Oaks Primary Academy - Ofsted Good
South Borough Primary School - Ofsted Good
St James the Great Academy - Ofsted Good
West Borough Primary School - Ofsted Good

Secondary Schools

Invicta Grammar School - Ofsted Good
Maidstone Grammar School for Girls - Ofsted Outstanding
Oakwood Park Grammar School - Ofsted Good
St Augustine Academy - Ofsted Good
The Maplesden Noakes School - Ofsted Good

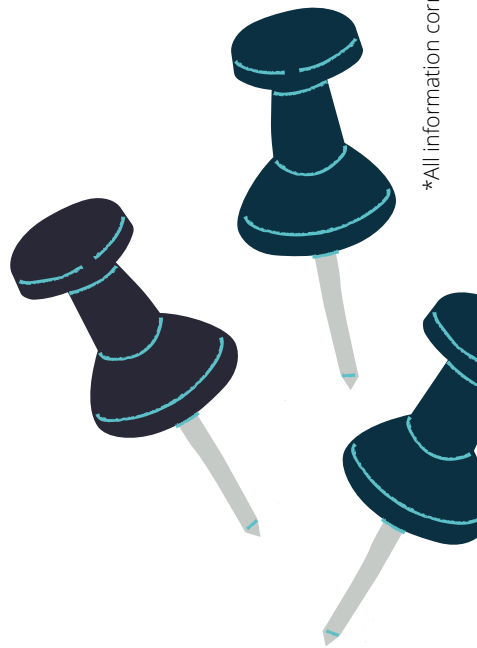
Independent Schools

Bryony School
MEPA Academy
OneSchool UK Maidstone Campus
St Helens Montessori School
Sutton Valence School

Local Further Education

Hadlow College
MidKent College - Ofsted Good
North Kent College - Ofsted Good
University of Creative Arts (Canterbury)
University of Kent - Ofsted Good

*All information correct as of December 2021



Things to Do in and Around Allington

Canterbury Cathedral

Only 30 miles from Allington is this World Heritage Site that is the cathedral for the leader of the Church of England, The Archbishop of Canterbury. Founded in 597, this spot witnessed the brutal murder of archbishop Thomas Becket by the knights of King Henry II in 1170. From then on, it became a place to pilgrimage for healing which thankfully gave us one of the best books ever – Geoffrey Chaucer’s Canterbury Tales.

Chatham Naval memorial

A must for history fans and essential for fans of naval history. This obelisk-centred memorial – one of only three in the UK – pays tribute to 18,621 members of the Royal Navy who died during the first and second world wars and have no known grave (that’s usually ‘buried or lost at sea’). It’s a striking spectacle, with added prominence from being on top of a hill.

Cobtree Manor Park

A good day out for the family in the fresh air. It’s renowned for being the spot where Maidstone Zoo used to be. Here there’s a gorgeous arboretum to wander around, including a self-guided trail taking about an hour and there’s a fort-themed adventure play area with things to climb, slide and swing on. Grown-ups, remember to let the children have a go!

Kent Life

A heritage farm park across the Medway to the north of Allington that’s worth a visit, especially with the children. They’ll love the tractor rides and the farm animals, but the highlight has got to be the educative trip down memory lane that is The Vintage Village. Think wartime cottages and interiors, a hopper’s hut, and a blacksmith’s forge. There’s a rumour of ghost sightings too.



Things to Do in and Around Allington

Kentish Lady Riverboat

Between Spring and Autumn, this service provides unique experiences up and down the River Medway. Private charters are available as well for those special occasions, such as birthdays and weddings. There are also three smaller day boats that are available for self-drive hire.

Leeds Castle

A pretty castle on a lake is always worth an eyeful. What of the name? Well, it has nothing to do with West Yorkshire and more to do with a Saxon gentleman called Led who built the first version in the ninth century. It's an interesting structure to contemplate and looks from some angles more like a big house pretending to be a castle. See what you think. Oh, and there's an aviary, a maze, and possibly the world's only dog collar museum.

Leybourne Lakes Country Park

Some old gravel pits converted into fishing and wildlife lakes, Leybourne is a magnet for birdwatchers, canoeists and kayakers. There are some excellent walks to be had in the adjacent woodland. There's a Parkrun every Saturday morning at 9am. There's a small charge for the car park, and there's usually a mobile caterer if you're feeling hungry.

Maidstone Museum

The museum has a pretty solid reputation as one of the most important museums in south-east England. Look out for the Anglo-Saxon and, oddly, Egyptian artefacts; a Greek pottery offering a vessel called a kernos that's 4,000 years old; one of the chairs Napoleon used to sit on in St Helena and a highlight for many, John Thomas' Lady Godiva statue. There's a substantial ceramic collection too.



Top 3 Things to do With Children in Allington

Buttercups Sanctuary for Goats

Sometimes, in life, one comes across something that's joyously compelling. This is one. It all started back in 1989 when Bob and Valerie Hitch took two unwanted goats into their care. They now have 137. This is a wonderful place to take the children. You can feed the goats, brush and groom them, go walking with them. The suggested minimum age is 12 – your children, not the goats!

Kent Owl Academy

Based in Kent Life heritage farm park, this family-run home to owls is a great place for your children to get up close and personal with these incredible birds of prey. Having an owl perching on your hand is an unmissable experience unless you forget to put your gauntlet on! Understandably the minimum age is six. Group sessions, animal-assisted therapy and phobia assistance are also available.

The Maze and Underground Grotto

Good fun and a harmless way to freak the children out. This maze at Leeds Castle is made up of over two thousand yew trees. It's a bit tricky to find your way through as it's designed as a circle within a square. If – and when – you get to the middle, you return to the free world via an underground grotto full of scary, macabre stuff. Good luck!



Shopping and Leisure in the Allington Area

Shopping

Mid Kent Shopping Centre is Allington's main retail hub and shopping in Allington is really shopping in Maidstone! In Maidstone, there's a pedestrianised shopping street called Week Street. There's an outdoor shopping centre in Fremlin Walk and an indoor one off King Street. There are some big shops next to the river on St. Peter's Wharf. Shopping hotspots include Gabriel's Hill, Royal Star Arcade, Pudding Lane and Union Street. Market wise, try Maidstone Market at Lockmeadow. There's a Farmer's Market in Jubilee Square on the fourth Friday of every month. The town's supermarkets include Kent International Food Centre, Letsco, Lidl, Morrisons, Sainsbury's, Tesco and Waitrose.

Restaurants

There are lots of great places to eat in Maidstone. Hot favourites include Miller and Carter and Buenos Aires Nights for steaks; Khan Spice and Shamrat for Indian; Fifi's Brasserie, St Leonard's and Frederic for European; Fish on the Green and Franks for fish; Narai Thai Palace and Thai Orchid for Thai; Vesuvius, La Villetta and La Taberna for Italian; Gem of Kent for Mediterranean; Alim-Et for Turkish, and 7 Miles Korean for Asian barbeques. For some café delights, try The Living Cafe, Meet Me Café, Old Boat Café, Café de Paris, Esquires Coffee and Café Beck.

Pubs and Nightclubs

Arguably some of the best watering holes in and around Maidstone are the Coach House on Queen Anne Road, the Fox & Goose on Weaving Street, The Brenchley on High Street, The Eagle Pub on Brewer Street, The Style and Winch and Duke of Marlborough on Union Street, The Walnut Tree on Tonbridge Road, The White Horse on London Road and Ye Olde Thirsty Pig on Knychtrider Street.



Shopping and Leisure in the Allington Area

Cinema and Theatre

There are two main big entertainment venues. The first is the Odeon Luxe in the Lockmeadow Entertainment Centre on Barker Road. The second is the Hazlitt Theatre on Earl Street that offers more beyond cinema, with dance, comedy, drama, and family shows. The Hazlitt also hosts the Maidstone Film Society if you're looking for something different to the usual Odeon fare.

Gym and Health

Leading the fitness pack is the Maidstone Leisure Centre at Mote Park. There's a gym, five swimming pools, workout rooms, six badminton courts and two 5-a-side pitches. The Lockmeadow Entertainment Centre has a David Lloyd Sports and Health Club, and there's a PureGym in The Mall. For yoga goings-on, try The Maidstone Iyengar Yoga Centre on Gabriels Hill, yoga with Helen Keates, and Heavenly Fitness for yoga, Pilates, and pole dancing.

Golf Clubs

The nearest golf clubs to Allington are Cobtree Manor Park Golf Course in the Cobtree estate, Tudor Park Golf and Country Club on Ashford Road, the young (1995) Kings Hill Golf Club in West Malling, and Patrick Dawson - who designed The Belfry - also designed The Ridge Golf Club.

Other Entertainment

There are three main skateparks close to Allington. The closest to the centre of Maidstone is the concrete Mote Park Skatepark in Mote Park. Then there's the metal-frame-and-timber-on-tarmac Whatman Park Skatepark on Buckland Lane and the concrete South Park Skatepark on Armstrong Road. Anyone for tennis? Closest to the centre of town is the Maidstone Tennis Academy on St Peters Street, Penenden Heath Tennis Academy on Coulters Close and South Eastern Tennis on Haywain Close. For boating, try the Maidstone Invicta Rowing Club on James Whatman Way. For tenpin bowling, try either Hollywood Bowl in the Lockmeadow Entertainment Centre or AMF Bowling in King Street.



Travel Connections

Only about thirty miles south-east of London and perfectly positioned for excursions to Europe by train or ferry, Allington is well connected when it comes to transport. There are three railway stations in Maidstone and four motorways nearby. There are good bus routes going in all directions. The joys of Chatham, Tonbridge, Sevenoaks and Royal Tunbridge Wells are only a few miles away. The nearest big airports are London Southend Airport, London City Airport and London Gatwick.



Maidstone Barracks, Maidstone East, and Maidstone West railway stations are all in town. Direct trains to London Victoria take about an hour. Trains to London Blackfriars and London Bridge take just over an hour. Nearer to home, there are direct connections to Paddock Wood (20 minutes), Tonbridge (30 minutes), Otford (20 minutes). Ashford International (for Eurostar) is 30 minutes away. Dover Priory for the ferries to Europe is just over an hour away.



Maidstone's location for those travelling by car is a dream. The north-south A229 runs through town, feeding just north of Maidstone into the M20 (that runs between the London Orbital M25 and Ashford, Folkestone and Dover to the south east) and then the M2 (that runs roughly Rochester to Faversham). The M26 is only about 20 miles away and feeds into the southern loop of the M25 and destinations westward around London.



The nearest big airports to Maidstone are London City Airport (about 35 miles), London Gatwick (about 40 miles) and London Southend Airport (about 50 miles).



The main bus company, Arriva, services Maidstone with around twenty bus routes. Buses through Allington include the 71 (running between Maidstone centre and Snodland), the 71A (running between Maidstone centre and New Hythe), the 72 (running between Maidstone centre and King's Hill). There is also a Park & Ride service from Allington into Maidstone town centre and an H1 bus to Maidstone Hospital. Main routes beyond the Maidstone area include the 155 (to Rochester and Chatham), the 101 (to Chatham and Gillingham), the 6/6A/6X (to Royal Tunbridge Wells), the 7 (to Hadlow, Tonbridge and Royal Tunbridge Wells), the 59 (to Ulcombe and Grafty Green) and the 334 (to Sittingbourne and Sheerness).



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BOOK A VALUATION!



Myself and my boyfriend recently exchanged contracts through Knight Edmonds and honestly could not thank everyone there enough for everything they have done for us through the whole process and always keeping us up to date. I especially cannot thank Sandra and Sam enough as they have dealt with me constantly calling them for months and always got the answers I needed and it never felt like I was bothering them 😊 We honestly couldn't have asked for a better estate agents to buy our first home with! Thankyou all so much!!

Karis & Charlie

All staff were excellent - very knowledgeable and gave the perfect advice about price. When issues arose, they were responsive and helpful and service was excellent throughout our sale and purchase. Would highly recommend!

Steve Perring

From the attitude of Alex at the initial meeting concerning introducing our property onto the market we were confident that we would get first class treatment from a team of people who are passionate about what they do, which is to efficiently sell houses. We have had contact with several members of the team during the sale process and we were always treated with respect and given the advice we requested as speedily as possible. We have already passed the company contact information to a long-term friend who is looking to make a move in the next few months and based on our own experience would not hesitate to recommend them again if asked

Mary Thomas

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