

LOCAL AREA GUIDE

Bearsted



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Bearsted is an attractive Kentish village with a population of around eight thousand according to the most recent census of 2011. It's situated close to the famous town of Maidstone, where during the Second World War, the skies were centre stage in the great Battle of Britain of 1940.

A little stream called the Lilk runs through the village, and two pubs and a cricket club watch over a lovely green. The old village centred around the green is very picturesque. Bearsted even has a railway station that was built in 1884.

Nearby Maidstone is the largest town in Kent, the county town adoringly known as the Garden of England due to its fame for growing fruit and hops.

Bearsted is in a blissful setting with beautiful surrounding countryside. There's a park and two main conservation areas in the village, including many Grade II listed buildings.

Another huge draw, and a more modern one, to living in Bearsted is its proximity to London, the south-east coast of England, and the rest of Europe across the English Channel. No less than four motorways are within a few miles of Bearsted.



"There are 17 Grade II listed buildings in Bearsted's The Green Conservation area."

History of Bearsted

It's thought that Bearsted is so called because a sloth of bears is depicted on the tower of the Grade 1 listed Holy Cross Church in the traditional centre of the village. An alternative meaning relating to the origin suggests a hill or tumulus.

The settlement certainly goes way back, with evidence of people living here in Saxon times. But the village started growing in earnest with the onset of the Industrial Revolution, which turned paths into tracks and tracks into roads. There were still only a few hundred people in Bearsted then, but as time moved on, the village's proximity to the nearby commercial hub of Maidstone, the Thames estuary in the north and north-west, and the south coast of England also encouraged further growth.

More recent times have seen significant residential development surrounding the original centre, making the village even more appealing as a place to live. Bearsted is now almost part of Maidstone, albeit on the edge of the town.



"Dinosaur remains of "Iggly the Iguanadon" were found in Maidstone in 1834. Iggly is on Maidstone's coat of arms."

Property Types in Bearsted

People like to live in and around Bearsted not just because it's a charming village surrounded by beautiful countryside, but the housing quality is good too. Bearsted is also a convenient and well-connected location for commuting into Maidstone centre, Chatham beyond that, Sevenoaks to the west and London to the north-west.

Generally, property in Bearsted is much sought after. It's a lovely setting for families, with easy access to the surrounding Kent countryside, and there are some great primary and secondary schools within easy reach.

Bearsted is spread across the edges of two postcodes – ME14 and ME15.

The average value of property in and around Bearsted at the time of writing* is around £467,000. Detached houses average £565,000, semi-detached around £414,000, terraced houses about £339,000 and flats are in the region of £231,000.

The average value of property in ME14 at the time of writing* is around £385,000. Detached houses average £573,000, semi-detached around £400,000, terraced houses about £281,000 and flats are in the region of £160,000.

The average value of property in ME15 at the time of writing* is about £348,000. Detached houses average £505,000, semi-detached around £346,000, terraced houses about £272,000 and flats are in the region of £187,000.

*All information correct as of February 2022



Schools and Colleges in and Around Bearsted

There are many Ofsted-rated 'Outstanding' and 'Good' schools in and around Bearsted. 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

Madginford Pre-School, Ofsted Outstanding
Pennies Day Nursery, Ofsted Good
St Peters Busy Bee's Pre-School, Ofsted Good
Tiny Tots Nursery School, Ofsted Good
Willow Rose Pre-School, Ofsted Good

Primary Schools

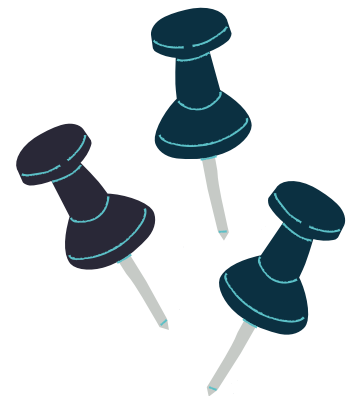
Greenfields Community Primary School, Ofsted Good
Madingford Primary School, Ofsted Good
Roseacre Junior School, Ofsted Outstanding
St John's Church of England Primary School, Ofsted Outstanding
Thurnham Church of England Infant School, Ofsted Outstanding

Secondary Schools

Invicta Grammar School, Ofsted Outstanding
Maidstone Grammar, Ofsted Good
Maidstone Grammar School for Girls, Ofsted Outstanding
New Line Learning Academy, Ofsted Good
Valley Park School, Ofsted Good

Independent Schools

Bethany School
MEPA Academy
OneSchool Global UK Maidstone
Rochester Independent College
Sutton Vallance 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

Things to Do in and Around Bearsted

Bearsted Woodland Trust

This is a gorgeous green space of about 26 acres close to Bearsted. It's run by a charity dedicated to giving the Bearsted locals somewhere to roam and enjoy some exercise. There's a children's play area, a maze and picnic tables. Special features include a wooden horse, a green man carved out of trees, the People's Wood, and some rock seats above Lilk stream.

Canterbury Cathedral

Canterbury Cathedral was founded in 597. A few hundred years later, it witnessed the murder of archbishop Thomas Becket by the knights of King Henry II in 1170. They'd travelled from France to do the dirty deed! The cathedral became a place to pilgrimage for healing which gave us the excellent book – Geoffrey Chaucer's Canterbury Tales. Give yourself at least a couple of hours here!

Cobtree Manor Park

Formerly Maidstone Zoo, now a charming arboretum to stroll through. There's a find-your-own-way trail taking about an hour. Look out for the fort-themed adventure play area with equipment to climb, swing and slide on. Parents, remember to let the children have a go!

Kent Life

Not far from Bearsted, this little heritage farm park will go down a treat with the children. They can have fun with farm animals and tractor rides, but the icing on the cake has got to be the enlightening wander down memory lane that is The Vintage Village. Find yourself in a blacksmith's forge, a hopper's hut, and wartime cottages.



Things to Do in and Around Bearsted

Kentish Lady Riverboat

The old Kentish Lady Riverboat – embark Maidstone – is a great excuse to get on the River Medway and relax with some riverine views. Choose a one-hour trip or a three-hour lunch, or a supper cruise. Some excursions stop at Allington Castle too. Trips operate in spring and summer only, but you can hire some smaller self-steer boats at other times.

Leeds Castle

This beautiful castle on a lake has nothing to do with West Yorkshire and more to do with a creative Saxon gentleman called Led, who constructed the first version in around the ninth century. It is a bit odd-looking for a castle, and from some aspects it could pass as a manor pretending to be a castle. There's an aviary, a maze, and the world's only dog collar museum!

Maidstone Museum

A fascinating place, full of curiosities. Maidstone Museum is reputedly one of the most significant museums in south-east England. Look out for the Greek pottery offering vessel called a kernos that's 4,000 years old; one of the chairs Napoleon used to sit on when pondering his plight in St Helena; Anglo-Saxon and, oddly, Egyptian artefacts; a stunning Lady Godiva statue by John Thomas. There is a vast ceramic collection here too.

Mote Park

Between Bearsted village and the centre of Maidstone is this 440-acre public park. Within it is the old Grade II listed Mote House, a boating lake, a miniature railway, an adventure play zone, a skate park, and a café. There's also a cricket pitch and squash club. It's a huge park – don't get lost!



Top 3 Things to Do With Children in and Around Bearsted

Buttercups Sanctuary for Goats

When Bob and Valerie Hitch took two unwanted goats into their care over thirty years ago, they had no idea it was the start of a paradise for the cloven-hoofed. At the last count, they had 137. This is a fun place to take the children. You can feed the goats, brush 'n' groom them, go for a stroll with them. The suggested minimum age is 12 – your children, not the goats!

Kent Owl Academy

This family-run home to owls is a great place for your children to get up close and personal with these extraordinary birds of prey. Having an owl perching on your hand is an unmissable experience, but understandably the minimum age for this experience is six. Group sessions, phobia assistance and animal assisted therapy are also available. The Academy is based in Kent Life Heritage Farm Park.

The Maze and Underground Grotto

This is an amusing way to spook and overexcite the children. The maze at Leeds Castle is made up of hundreds of yew trees. It's a bit tough finding your way through as it's created as a circle in a square! If – and when – you get to the middle of the circle, or square, you escape via an underground grotto full of creepy ghouls.

"In 1875 one of Bearsted Cricket Clubs members was the famous Kent cricketer Alfred Mynn, known as Mighty Mynn, the Lion of Kent."



Shopping and Leisure in Bearsted and Maidstone

Shopping

Bearsted has a selection of shops, including two supermarkets - Co-op and Tesco and a mini shopping centre. Other shops include Hunker Down Daisy for flowers on Roseacre Lane, Annabelle Jane Cake School near the Green and Pink Flamingo fashion on Trapfield Lane. 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 and the Farmer's Market in Jubilee Square, which takes place 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

Bearsted has a great selection of eateries, including Fish on the Green for fish and chips, Noble House and Nai's Garden for Chinese, Bearsted Spice and The Rose Inn & Delhi Spice for Indian, The Yeoman for Mediterranean, The Bell Inn for Thai, and the Oak on the Green, The Romney Restaurant at Mote House and The Kings Arms for British. There are, of course, many more 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; 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 nearby café delights, try The Cavendish, BeeZoo, Coffee Corner and Oak on the Green.

Pubs and Nightclubs

The ten closest pubs in and around Bearsted are The White Horse and the Oak on the Green (on The Green!), The Bell Inn on Ware Street, The Newnham Court Inn on Bearsted Road, The Rose Inn on Ashford Road, The Fox & Goose on Weaving Street, Chiltern Hundreds on Penenden Heath Road, Cock Horse on The Street, The Black Horse Inn on Pilgrims Way and the Hare and Hounds on Lower Boxley Road. Arguably some of the best watering holes in and around Maidstone are the Coach House on Queen Anne Road, The Brenchley on High Street, The Eagle Pub on Brewer Street, The Style and Winch and Duke of Marlborough on Union Street, The White Horse on London Road and Ye Olde Thirsty Pig on Kightrider Street.



Shopping and Leisure in Bearsted and Maidstone

Cinema and Theatre

Beyond Bearsted's very own Bearsted & Thurnham King George V Memorial Hall, Maidstone has two main entertainment venues. The first is the versatile Hazlitt Theatre on Earl Street that offers more than just cinema, with dance, comedy, drama, and family shows. The Hazlitt also hosts the Maidstone Film Society if you're looking for something intriguing. The second is the Odeon Luxe in the Lockmeadow Entertainment Centre on Barker Road.

Gym and Health

In and around Bearsted are LivingWell fitness centre on Bearsted Road, Jackie Pearce Pilates on Tower Lane, Dragon Kickboxing at St Peter's Church, Core Yoga on Gascoyne Close, the Audley Club at Mote House on Mote Road, and Bob Prowse Health Club on Armstrong Road. The Tudor Park Spa in Bearsted offers relaxing beauty treatments, a spa and restaurant facilities for those who want to feel pampered! Leading the fitness pack in nearby Maidstone is the Maidstone Leisure Centre at Mote Park. It has a gym, five swimming pools, workout rooms, six badminton courts and two 5-a-side pitches. There's a David Lloyd Sports and Health Club in the Lockmeadow Entertainment Centre and a PureGym in The Mall. For some stretching and relaxing, try Heavenly Fitness for yoga, Pilates, and pole dancing, or The Maidstone Iyengar Yoga Centre on Gabriels Hill.

Golf Clubs

Bearsted has an 18-hole course at the aptly named Bearsted Golf Club. Here there is a 'turn up and play' policy for members, and visitors may play from 10am on weekdays and after 1pm at weekends, subject to availability. Other golf courses in order of proximity are The Tudor Park Country Club, Leeds Castle Golf Club south-east of Bearsted, Cobtree Manor Park Golf Course in the Cobtree estate north-west of Bearsted, and the Patrick Dawson-designed The Ridge Golf Club south of Bearsted.

Other Entertainment

If you're game for a laugh and some jolly good fun, hire a Segway in Mote Park and Leeds Castle! Fancy a game of tennis? Look no further than Bearsted & Thurnham Tennis Club. It's family orientated for all ages and abilities. Or bowls? The friendly mixed club welcomes new members, young and old, beginners or experienced! Close to the centre of Maidstone 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, and for tenpin bowling there's Hollywood Bowl in the Lockmeadow Entertainment Centre and AMF Bowling in King Street. If you're up for some cricket, enquire at the pavilion on The Green in Bearsted. The nearest skatepark to Bearsted is the BMX and skate park in Mote Park. A little further afield, there's Maidstone Skatepark and to the south the Park Wood Skatepark on Bicknor Road.

"Bearsted has vineyards, producing more than 10,000 bottles
of wine a year!"

Travel Connections

Only about forty miles south-east of London and perfectly positioned for excursions to Europe by train or ferry, Bearsted is well connected when it comes to transport. The M20 runs through the north edge of Bearsted, and the A249 and A20 can zip you into Maidstone. Bearsted has a railway station, and nearby Maidstone has three. The joys of Maidstone, Royal Tunbridge Wells, Tonbridge, Chatham, and Sevenoaks are only a few miles away. The nearest big airports are London City Airport, London Southend Airport and London Gatwick.



Bearsted station is serviced by South Eastern railways, which has a regular service from Ramsgate to London Victoria. One stop into Maidstone (5 minutes), and you have a choice of three stations: Maidstone Barracks, Maidstone East, and Maidstone West. From Maidstone, direct trains to London Victoria take about an hour. Trains to London Blackfriars and London Bridge take just over an hour. From Bearsted, there are direct local connections to Otford (30 minutes) and West Malling (15 minutes). Ashford International (for Eurostar) is just 20 minutes away. Dover Priory for the ferries to Europe is just over an hour away.



The A20 and A249 take you into Maidstone from Bearsted. The village's easy access to the M20 (that runs between the London Orbital M25 and Ashford, Folkestone, and Dover to the south east) also feeds into the M2 (that runs from Rochester to Faversham) via the A249. The M26 is only 25 miles away and feeds into the southern loop of the M25 and destinations westward around London.



The nearest big airports to Bearsted are London City Airport (about 38 miles), London Gatwick (about 44 miles) and London Southend Airport (about 52 miles).



The Stagecoach X10 (Ashford to Maidstone) and the Arriva 4, 9 and 11 will pop you into Maidstone for accessible onward routes. The Arriva 643 runs between Grove Green and Linton via Bearsted. Maidstone has around twenty bus routes. These 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).



20-22 King Street, Maidstone, ME14 1DE

Telephone: 01622 291491

Email: maidstone@knightedmonds.co.uk

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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