



## Out of town: Telford, Shropshire

This former chapel in Shropshire, near Telford, has a 14th-century font, mullion windows, stone arches and an oak staircase to four bedrooms and a skylit attic room.

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## New skyscrapers and designer towers at Waterloo bring 2,000 new homes

Waterloo, Britain's biggest railway station — and the iconic Shell Centre — are at the heart of a South Bank transformation bringing 2,000 new homes to this commuter hub, says David Spittles



© Hayes Davidson

The iconic Shell Centre occupies a prized riverside plot between the Royal Festival Hall and County Hall, while (in the foreground) a 43-storey tower in Doon Street will have 355 private flats offering spectacular views (coinstreet.org)

The area around London's busiest commuter hub, which includes **Waterloo** — Britain's biggest railway station at 24.5 acres — is preparing to become a serious residential destination.

**The Shell Centre** at Waterloo, a monumental landmark of gleaming Portland stone, is to become a stunning mixed-use scheme with 877 new homes. The architecturally admired oil company office tower, built in the wake of the Festival of Britain, will be the centrepiece of the project, ringed by new lower-rise blocks and with a new city square, improved public spaces and pedestrian routes to the Royal Festival Hall and the train terminus.

It is one of several key South Bank projects under way or in the pipeline that are complementing a £1.3 billion ongoing refurbishment of the station.

Also, the disused Eurostar terminal is to be brought back to life for commuter services and as a retail mall, while **Elizabeth House**, a Sixties eyesore that runs the length of the station along York Road, is to be replaced with 142 flats and offices.

▶ [Search for houses and flats for sale in Waterloo](#)

Coin Street Community Builders, the influential grass-roots group that converted derelict Oxo Tower into a fashionable complex of galleries and restaurants, is redeveloping the remaining chunk of land it owns — 13 acres currently used as a car park, opposite the National Theatre.

The scheme in **Upper Ground** will bring extra vitality to Waterloo, with a new headquarters and studios for the Rambert Dance Company as well as a 43-storey tower with 355 private flats offering spectacular views, and a leisure centre, cafés and crêche. A new square will provide a pedestrian link to Waterloo Bridge and quicker cross-river access to Covent Garden. Phase one is due for completion in 2014. Visit [coinstreet.org](#).

**Waterloo: good value in zone 1**

Hundreds more flats are coming soon in two designer towers next to the Oxo Tower. "Boosting the residential population is a long-term planning goal," said Coin Street's Louise King. "It will reduce the need to commute to central London and strengthen the local economy."

Creative businesses and restaurants are opening in refurbished railway arches nearby. Corporate relocations from the City are also taking place because south of the river is no longer merely a spillover location but a destination in its own right.

All this is causing property ripples in the hinterland back from the river, a good-value Zone 1 address within the price range of many first-time buyers. Beyond the station, Waterloo appears workaday but has a good urban residential mix — pretty



The Shell Centre will offer 877 new homes at the centrepiece of a spectacular scheme

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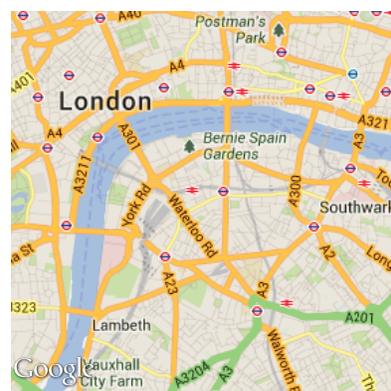
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Victorian terraces such as Roupell Street, charitable housing, cared-for council estates and small pockets of new apartments rather than sweeping waterfront developments.



One Blackfriars will have 274 new flats in a tapering 50-storey tower. To register, call St George on 020 7871 7188

Borough Road and is becoming a development corridor. Derelict parking sites and redundant warehouses are being snapped up. Schemes are imminent on King's Bench Street and Glasshouse Street.

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**South Bank Tower** is a refurbishment of a former office tower on Stamford Street bringing 173 private apartments, including four-bedroom super-deluxe penthouses with more than 4,000sq ft of space. Prices from £625,000. Call CBRE on 020 7182 2060.

Right next door is **One Blackfriars**, 50 storeys and 274 flats, the first of several new developments set to transform Blackfriars Road. The glass-façade tower tapers in at the bottom and will be similar in height to the Gherkin. To register, call St George on 020 7871 7188.

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**The battle to build: The Shell Centre**

The Shell Centre occupies a prized riverside plot between the Royal Festival Hall and County Hall. When built in 1961, the tower was the tallest structure in the UK and though its design was denounced by Modern Movement critics it has since acquired architectural cachet.

Facilities for staff at the oil firm's global HQ were lavish for the time, with a full-size swimming pool and a spacious gym, theatre, rifle range and snooker room in the basement. Three adjoining "wings" are to be bulldozed in the redevelopment.

During the year-long consultation process, Lambeth council received 67 objections to the proposal, with residents at the White House, part of the original Shell complex which was later converted into flats, protesting that the sense of history would be lost forever. "The area will become just another high-rise non-entity," they claimed.

However, Michael Squire, partner at masterplan architect Squire & Partners, said: "It brings a variety of routes from the station to the river, a revitalised public realm and a mix of uses that will make it a genuine new piece of the city."



Tina Evans is a new resident in the area and has been won over by friendly locals and a good-value home

She paid less than £500,000 for a two-bedroom flat which would have cost her from £650,000 to £700,000 in the City.

The building of Waterloo station in 1848 created a number of yards and cul-de-sacs. These fragments exist alongside surviving courts and alleyways that are being discovered by developers. Lancor Homes is redeveloping a site **on the corner of Baylis Road and Murphy Street** into warehouse-style offices and nine apartments, including a penthouse. Completion is due in September 2013. Call 020 3589 1734.

**Waterloo's back streets: homes from £350,000**

Other developers are focusing on Waterloo back streets bordering Borough and Kennington. Here, the entry price is about £350,000 for a one-bedroom flat, according to Frank Harris, one of the area's few estate agents.

Check out Great Suffolk Street, which runs from Bankside to



A new public square, leisure centre, cafés and a crèche are part of the Waterloo revival and The Shell Centre redevelopment

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