

## **Tales from a Kent Property Search Agent**

### **Why we love St Margaret's Bay, Kingsdown and Deal**

#### **Accessible, Lively and Very Good Value**

Property Turner has recently been undertaking a search for a discerning gentleman who wants to hear the sea. He has previously owned properties in The Witterings and also Dorset but he felt he simply did not use these homes because of the 'awful Friday night hassle'. He was looking for somewhere with good communications and genuinely within an hour and a half of London.

**Enter Kent and the High Speed Train, Ashford in 38 minutes, Dover 1 hour 8 minutes and Deal 1 hour 16 minutes.**

Ashford itself is nothing to write home about although the Ring Road now boasts a new John Lewis at Home, a big Waitrose and the Designer outlet has recently gone upmarket with the arrival of Abercrombie and Fitch, Superdry, Wagamamas, Molton Brown, Links of London and Polo Ralph Lauren. Also the Eurostar train stops here, **Ashford to Paris 1 hour and 52 minutes.**

However it is the accessibility of Deal and its environs that really excites me. From January 2015 trains between London and Deal will run hourly. The station in Deal is right in the town centre; we walked to Beach Street from the station in 6 minutes, an important consideration when buying a property.

**Deal town centre is a gem.** The town has won the Daily Telegraph High Street of the Year 2013 and again this year has been nominated as the No 1 Coastal Town. It is a thriving town with a slightly arty vibe.

Deal is a very real town with a vibrant high Street. The usual multiples are there in keeping with a town this size, a small Marks and Spencer for example, slightly old fashioned but one of its most profitable stores. There are 3 weekly markets and a monthly farmers market. There are also numerous independent shops, all trading well including, butchers, green grocers, numerous delis, gentleman's outfitters, book shop, vintage shops, specialist chocolate shop, cook shops, and a ladies upmarket fashion boutique to name but a few. There are also a number of excellent restaurants and cafes, mostly independent, and a fantastic real fish and chip shop with queues forming down Middle Street when they are frying.

There is a buzz to the town with lots going on from the sporty, with The sailing club, a rowing club, even the Jelly Legs running club to the arts with a writers club, life drawing society and choirs singing everything from folk to Handel and everything in between.

The surprise in Deal is the very attractive Conservation area with numerous small roads running off Middle Street, which is a narrow street running the length of Deal between the sea front and The High Street.

There is great housing stock, mostly Grade 2 listed and just full of character.

Very broad brush prices, 3 bedroom listed terrace property in The Conservation Area £350,000; 2 bedroom flat overlooking the sea

£240,000; 6 bedroom, on the sea front, great location, beautifully done up £1.5M.

**St Margaret's Bay**, 10 minutes in a taxi from Dover Priory Station, 10 minutes drive from Deal.

St Margaret's Bay is the actual beach (part sand, pebble and shingle) and the village above is called St Margaret's at Cliffe and is a busy little village with a Post Office, several shops and a shabby chic New England style hotel, The White Bay Hotel. Its sister hotel, Wallets Court, is 5 minutes away towards Dover and is a lovely small family owned Country House Hotel, with fine dining, a small swimming pool and spa area and roaring log fires in winter. From St Margaret's at Cliffe there are fabulous cliff top walks in both directions, each direction has a lighthouse on the footpath, both offering fabulous tea, coffees, cakes, lunches etc. (One owned by The National Trust)

What I really love about this place though is the housing stock, think of large Edwardian style villas with verandas and the spectacular uninterrupted sea views perched on the hillside, think Hercule Poirot, rather gentle and charming. It is rumoured that both Noel Coward and Ian Fleming both had properties at the end of the beach and a number of other actors have had homes here.

The walk along the cliffs from St Margaret's to Kingsdown and Deal has got to be one of the finest walks in Kent

Vey broad brush prices £700,000 will buy a decent 3 bedroom house, £875,000 a large 4 bedroomed villa.

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**Kingsdown, 5 minutes in a taxi from Deal.** A small quaint village, pebble beach and rows of fisherman's cottages. Shepherd Neame have recently refurbished its pub, The Zetland Arms, right on the sea front; cosy in winter and spilling out to the beach in summer. 3 bedroom fisherman's cottage will set you back about £300,000.

Up on the cliffs at the Beginning of Kingsdown are a few, maybe 7 or 8 truly spectacular properties. We viewed one of these properties and from the kitchen I stared in one direction towards the sea, watching the ferries go past, so close I felt I was practically in the restaurant, and then I turned to face the other direction and there was beautiful English rolling countryside. I simply can't believe you could get that size of property, with spectacular sea and country views so close to London, regardless of price (incidentally this was on the market for about £1.5M, approx 6,000 sq ft and is rumoured to be under offer to some Americans who have scoured the whole of the South of England from Broadstairs as far as Devon to find the right property with the right connection to the sea close to a great community).

Tempted by this area, looking for a second home to escape the smog or for a full scale relocation please contact Helen Turner, Property Turner, for an informal chat. [www.propertyturner.co.uk](http://www.propertyturner.co.uk) 01580 714214.