

House&Home

The world at your feet

Property | As buyers search for remote homes,

Liz Rowlinson looks at the best locations for keen walkers across the UK and Europe

Jonathan Smith moved to the Yorkshire Dales 10 years ago to be close to North Yorkshire's wonderful walking trails. He had previously lived in north London and Chester, but weekends at his fell-walking father's home in the Lake District had instilled a love of rambling since childhood.

"I relish the solitude and the chance to let my thoughts wander freely on the Dales. It's possible to rove across the rolling fields and moors peppered with old barns and criss-crossed by drystone walls without seeing a soul," says Smith, who now runs navigation courses after giving up his career in the travel industry. "Since the outbreak of coronavirus, walking has taken on a new significance for many – it's the perfect form of exercise for socially distancing, enjoying the scenery and clearing the mind."

Now with restrictions easing, dozens of walking groups are beginning to reu-

nite and trails across the country are reopening to people from around the world. Smith has just restarted his navigation courses on the Dales – an eight-hour day of learning how to use a map – and he has added extra dates due to a spike in interest (where2walk.co.uk).

"I avoid the popular tourist honeypots of Malham, Aysgarth and Grassington and especially love Swaledale in the north," says Smith. "Muker, Thwaite and Keld are wonderful little villages close to the Pennine Way," he adds, referring to the ancient 268-mile trail from Derbyshire to Scotland.

Smith lives in Long Preston, a village near Settle – the wider area is home to Yorkshire's Three Peaks 12-hour challenge. "The main criterion was a popular village with plenty of walks from the door," he says.

As lockdown eases, many homebuyers might be tempted to do the same. "Remote locations are suddenly in demand," says Ed Stoye of agent Carter Jonas. The availability of high-speed broadband has made the Dales an option for settling there full-time, especially for those later in their careers, says Stoye. Small farms are popular (a modest farmhouse with outbuildings on typically 2-5 acres) and cost from about £500,000; or three to four-bedroom period cottages at £400,000-£500,000.

In Arncliffe, another of Smith's ideal villages, there's a three-bedroom stone barn conversion for sale for £550,000, through Dacre, Son & Hartley.

But where else might the passionate walker be looking for a home? The FT



has scoured the UK and Europe in search of walking hotspots that are appealing to property buyers.

Lake District, Cumbria

On climbing to the summit of Orrest Head on the eastern shore of Windermere in Cumbria in 1923, Alfred Wainwright, England's most famous fell-walker, described the view. "I saw mountain ranges, one after another, the

nearer starkly etched, those beyond fading into the blue distance. Rich woodlands, emerald pastures and the shimmering waters of the lake below added to a pageant of loveliness."

Such inspiring vistas – and Wainwright's collection of books *The Pictorial Guides to the Lakeland Fells*, which chart 214 scenic treks – have drawn walkers to the Lake District national park in north-west England for decades.

Today, keen walkers like to tick off the Wainwright walks they have done, says Savills' Jamie Adam, and a handful like it so much they will buy a home in the park. He says that one Midlands-based couple recently bought an apartment at the new Ironworks development (a converted former blast furnace) at Backbarrow – where prices start from £215,000 for a one-bedroom flat – as a weekend walking base.

Property prices are higher on the eastern part of the park where access (via the M6) is easier and it offers the popular towns of Ambleside, Windermere, Kendal and Keswick, according to



Savills. But Andrew Dawson, committee member of the 1,500-strong Wainwright Society, prefers the west because there are fewer tourists.

"While the hordes head to Scafell Pike [England's highest peak], I prefer to head to the fells of Whin Rigg and Illgill Head, where scree slopes plunge down towards Wastwater, the deepest lake in England," he says. "It offers plenty of scope for quiet contemplation."



Crowhurst, Surrey



A magnificent Grade I listed moated manor. Set in spectacular gardens with views across its 153 acre estate.

4 RECEPTION ROOMS | 5 PRINCIPAL BEDROOMS | STAFF FLAT | GRADE II LISTED GRANARY AND BARN | SWIMMING POOL | TENNIS COURT | A PAIR OF GATE LODGES | LINGFIELD 1.6 MILES | CENTRAL LONDON 25.7 MILES

Offers in excess of £6,000,000
Ref. CHO190098

clive.hopkins@knightfrank.com 020 7861 1064



MESSINIA, GREECE

Time For simple joys



At Costa Navarino you connect with the simplicity of life and the things that matter the most. It's a place where children can roam free until the sunset brings them home. Where food is grown in your garden and wine comes from your vineyard. It's a connection with the nature, people and history of one of the last unspoiled corners of the Mediterranean. A place to create a legacy of happiness.



3-4 bedroom villas from €1.2 million

Part of 5* resort | Two signature golf courses | Unique beachfront location
Email: info@navarinoresidences.com | Telephone: +30 211 016 0200
Visit: www.costanavarino.com/real-estate

COSTA NAVARINO

House & Home



according to Ordnance Survey's mapping system, includes the most popular starting point for a walk in the UK: Edale. A cluster of tiny hamlets at the end of the Hope Valley, Edale is handy for the craggy limestone escarpments of the Dark Peak and the plateau of Kinder Scout, a demanding 4 to 5-hour hike.

It is not the only well-equipped village offering easy access to Sheffield and Manchester, both within 30 minutes, with Hathersage, Hope, Grindleford and Baslow also popular bases, according to Chris Charlton of Savills, who has experienced a 25 per cent rise in inquiries between March, before lockdown, and June from London buyers for rural bolt-holes in the area. "These areas are commutable, yet offer walks from the door, along the Derwent River valley or to Stanage Edge, a grit stone escarpment popular with climbers," he says.

A terraced or detached stone cottage in a village costs between £200,000 and £250,000, he says, while a four-bedroom period house with a garden costs upwards of £700,000. In Edale itself,

(Above) The village of Thwaite in the Yorkshire Dales; (right) a six-bedroom villa in Portofino, Italy, on sale for €3.95m



there's a Grade II-listed, three-bedroom detached house for sale for £750,000 from agents Eadon Lockwood & Riddle.

Cornwall England's longest footpath, the South West Coast Path, is on many a walker's list of places to visit – a string of sheer cliffs, stacks, islets and bays that might take the most energetic strider 30 days to complete. Cornwall is home to a

meandering 299 miles (480km) of it, including three peninsulas – the Lizard, Land's End and the Roseland.

The latter, close to Truro on the south coast of Cornwall – is the best suited of the three for a full-time base, according to agent Jonathan Cunliffe. "Close to the best schooling [around Truro], this area is less about second homes than the more fashionable north coast's Rock and Padstow. Roseland's St Just, St

Ramblers and amblers from all walks of life

The Ramblers, the UK walking charity, has a membership of more than 100,000, which includes 500 voluntary walking groups. About 50 of these groups are for people in their twenties and thirties – a growing demographic that includes "urban ramblers". In England, the current guidance is to walk with up to five people from other households, maintaining social distancing. See ramblers.org.uk/coronavirus.

Detached properties within national parks in England and Wales come at a 23 per cent premium to those outside the park, according to Knight Frank



Research. For properties within the Lake District, the premium is 46 per cent; for the North York Moors it is 32 per cent and the Peak District 20.8 per cent; the Yorkshire Dales has the lowest premium at just over 1 per cent.



Europe

The communal hiking tradition began in the 1860s in the Alps, but since then many walking groups have sprung up across the continent. In 1905, Mallorca's first excursion group began at the same time as the island's tourist board, and still walks twice weekly (after a break during lockdown), setting off from Palma to explore a network of 320km of signposted hiking trails.

It was to meet new people near his family home in Rapallo, Italy, that Milan-based Andrea Vidusso set up hiking group Liguriaia to explore the spectacular coast east of Genoa, where the Apennines plunge down to secret bays.

"Fifty per cent of the English-speaking group work in tech like me but tourists often join after finding us on Facebook," he says. The group meets every two weeks for three to four hours, with a stop at a food festival where possible.

In Portofino, which marks the start of the trek to the Cala degli Inglesi, a six-bedroom villa is for sale for €3.95m.

Walking is popular in Brittany, north-western France, where flyers for the numerous groups can be found in the *boulangeries*. The region is home to one of France's favourite hikes, the GR 34, which passes through rugged headlands, dramatic cliffs, wide sandy beaches and quaint fishing ports.

The area's widespread 4G reception is attracting an increasing number of people to relocate there, especially British and Americans, reports John Kertland of Leggett Immobilier, based in Finistère: "A traditional Breton house on a hectare costs €150,000-€350,000 – about 40 minutes from the ferry port at Roscoff – but Parisian families who love hiking also have holiday homes here."

Anthony Head and Portloe are ideal locations for keen walkers."

It was the 20 circular walks around Roseland that attracted writer Andrew Alderson to Portloe, a former fishing village where he built an eco-home 12 years ago after moving from Chiswick in west London. He is part of a monthly walking group of eight friends and has written a book about the trails.

"I've done many great walks around the world but Cornwall is right up there among the best," he says. "Less busy than the north coast and with a kinder climate, on Roseland even in August it's possible to not bump into a single person, yet glimpse whales and seals from isolated bays and clifftops. Along the way we talk about marriage, work, financial problems – the benefits are therapeutic, physical and social," he adds. "And after a five-hour walk we finish at a pub for lunch."

On the Lizard Peninsula, a four-bedroom home with crenellated roof, a cottage and other accommodation, is being sold for £1.85m by The Modern House.



ONE CROWN PLACE

NEW 12TH FLOOR SHOW APARTMENT NOW OPEN

LIVE A SHORT WALK FROM YOUR OFFICE WITH VIEWS OF THE CITY AND SHOREDITCH. EXPERIENCE OUR NEW SHOW APARTMENT AND LEARN MORE ABOUT THE ROOF TERRACE, WORK HUB, HOTEL AMENITIES AND OUR ON-SITE MEMBERS CLUB.

1, 2 & 3 BED APARTMENTS AVAILABLE. MOVE IN SPRING 2021. BOOK YOUR VIEWING*. PRICES FROM £995,000

DEVELOPED BY

MTD

ADVISED BY

CBRE

*Social distancing measures will be in place alongside a range of health and safety procedures to ensure your safety whilst visiting our marketing suite and show apartment.