

AS SEEN IN

# PERIOD LIVING

TRADITIONAL HOMES, INTERIORS, GARDENS, ANTIQUES & RENOVATION



## REGIONAL PROPERTY

**OPPOSITE TOP** Richmond in its lovely wooded site on the Swale  
**OPPOSITE** A typical stone barn in verdant Swaledale  
**TOP LEFT** Richmond's Georgian Theatre Royal, built in 1788, is an architectural gem and the oldest working theatre in Britain  
**BELOW LEFT** The Station, the recently restored former railway station, which holds regular art exhibitions and runs a cinema, cafe and restaurant, is popular with locals  
**LEFT** The River Swale from Green Bridge, built in 1788, and so called because it leads to the Green in Richmond town  
**BELOW** Hardy Swaledale sheep and lambs are corralled  
**BOTTOM** The castle keep dominates Richmond: 109ft high, it has fine views of the town, the River Swale and the Dales countryside

## Richmond fact file

**AVERAGE PROPERTY PRICE** £220,000  
**TWO-BED STONE COTTAGE** From £140,000  
**FOUR-BED TOWNHOUSE** From £200,000  
**FIVE-BED DALES HOUSE** From £400,000  
**TRAIN** 2 hours 20 mins, Darlington to Kings Cross  
**CAR** 240 miles, about 4½ hours  
**AIRPORT** Durham Tees Valley Airport



Frenchgate are among desirable roads, which have an attraction unique to the town of views of the surrounding hills and dales. Prices for a four-storey Georgian townhouse here are around £425,000 upwards. The area around the Green and the characterful cobbled medieval thoroughfare of Newbiggin are other hotspots: Charltons, an independent local agent, is selling a listed four-bedroom house with fine views of the Green for £400,000.

Typical buyers are families wanting to be in the catchment area of the excellent Richmond School (a co-educational comprehensive) and army families from the Catterick garrison; those retiring who will cope with the hills and cobbles in return for the views and the amenities of a lively market town; and second-home owners who have easy access to the Dales.

Marcus Alderson (marcusalderson.co.uk), who set up his estate agency two years ago, has an interesting range of properties for sale. Period properties on his books include a three-bed cottage with modernised interior on Anchorage Hill at £169,950 that would make a good second home or holiday let – as would the apartments, from £220,000, in a former convent on Reeth Road. 'The Convent has leafy views over the Swale, shared orchard and woodland, and is within walking distance of

town', he says. Properties in the Dales villages are scarcer: good views and, if not for a family, potential as a B&B are considerations: tempting examples are a converted schoolhouse in Low Row (see overleaf) at £469,000 with JR Hopper, an estate agent in the market town of Leyburn, or the five-bed East Mill House in Grinton at £460,000, with Charltons.

Living in Richmond  
Richmond is between Swaledale and the North York Moors to the east, yet it is minutes from major arterial roads – the A1 and the A66 west to Penrith and the Lake District – so Barnard Castle, Darlington and Northallerton are easily commutable, even York or Leeds. Darlington, which has mainline rail links to Newcastle and Scotland, and York and London to the south, is only half an hour's drive away.

Last November Richmond beat off national competition to win the Great Town Award, judged annually by 100 top architects of the



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think-tank Academy of Urbanism. It was praised as a self-sufficient town that supports the local economy and proudly preserves its heritage.

Look at the website, richmond.org, and you will indeed discover a community spirit that will satisfy the most energetic and curious newcomer to the town. Started by Andy Russell 10 years ago, and updated daily, it lists, among much else, community groups such as the Fellmongers of Richmond (these are dealers in sheepskins) – one of only two guilds to have survived – or the Amateur Dramatic Society.

The players perform in the exquisite Grade I-listed Georgian Theatre Royal (georgiantheatre.com), whose enthusiastic patrons are the Prince of Wales and the Duchess of Cornwall; at the hub of the town it also hosts touring companies and concerts.

Another major focus of the community is The Station (the station.co.uk), the restored railway terminus which lies on the edge of town, and which opened just over a year ago. Richmondshire Building Preservation Trust spearheaded the revival of the Victorian building, preserving the ticket office, and providing art exhibitions, a restaurant, cinema, and food shops selling locally made bread, beer, cheese, ice cream and jams. 'It's a great meeting place – the cinema was much-needed – and it attracts regular visitors from 15 miles around,' says Lou Holliday, a trustee. 'Sixty volunteers help with the day-to-day running.'

## Top attractions

To appreciate the places mentioned and others, a walk around the town with a map from the tourist office in Victoria Road is essential. Take in the Castle Walk for views and explore the memorable garden of Millgate House, a Georgian townhouse filled with antiques owned by Austin Lynch and Tim Culkin, who



**ABOVE** Richmond's vast marketplace, lined with Georgian houses  
**TOP RIGHT** Looking across town to the 1746 Culloden Tower, now run by The Landmark Trust

run an exceptional B&B. Seek out York House Antiques in Market Place, brimming with vintage collectables, and Castle Hill Bookshop, where the local MP William Hague and his wife Ffion do signings. Sip Coffee, a cafe in King Street, is a popular meeting place in town, and the Frenchgate Restaurant and Hotel is the place for a special lunch or dinner.

A large part of Richmondshire District, which covers around 500 square miles but has a population of 50,700 (8,000 in Richmond), is in the Yorkshire Dales National Park. Swaledale has an austere beauty; pass fast-flowing beck, and hills and moors laced with dry-stone walls and dotted with newborn lambs. Reeth, a pretty Georgian village with a green, is a good base for walkers. You can learn about the area's intriguing lead mining history and local crafts in the Swaledale Museum and sample the produce of the excellent Reeth Bakery.

There are wooded walks in either direction from Richmond along the Swale and visit dales.bus.org for walks to the Dales that rely on public transport. Further afield, explore part of the Pennine Way from the Tan Hill Inn, the highest pub in England. On a wide saddle of moor, the remote stone hostelry welcomes walkers. Other outstanding pubs, with good food in scenic settings, include the Punch Bowl Inn in Low Row, the Bolton Arms in Downholme and the CB Inn in Langthwaite. ⇐



**6 Bridge Street, Richmond, £310,000**  
Listed stone terrace cottage overlooking the Green with upstairs views of Culloden Tower. It has three bedrooms, a kitchen with beech work surfaces and central fireplaces in the living and the dining room; French windows lead to the well stocked walled garden which has a stone terrace and river views. Charltons (01748 822525; charltonsestateagents.com).

**30 Maison Dieu, Richmond, £460,000**  
A rare chance to buy a listed Georgian townhouse with views of Richmond and the Swale. Kitchen and dining room on lower ground floor; airy sitting room and study on ground floor; five bedrooms, two bathrooms, with two further WCs. Has attractive south-facing garden on three tiers. Norman F Brown (01748 822473; normanbrown.co.uk).

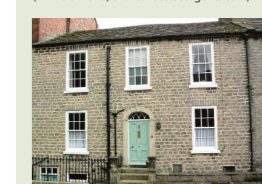
**The Old School, Low Row, £469,000**  
Converted schoolhouse in a popular Dales village with magnificent south-facing views. Spacious and light, it has a large open-plan living room, modern fitted kitchen with limestone floor, four double bedrooms and two bathrooms. Walled front garden, terracing and lawn, with stone-built workshop. J R Hopper & Co (01969 622936; jrhopper.com).

**YOUR ESSENTIAL CONTACTS**  
• **Tourist Information Centre** (01748 828742; yorkshiredales.org) • **Richmond Online** (01748 826609; richmond.org)  
• **Richmondshire District Council** (01748 829100; richmondshire.gov.uk) • **Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority** (0300 456 0030; yorkshiredales.org.uk)

## Property for sale



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## Gateway to the Dales

Recently named the 'greatest' town in Britain, Richmond in Yorkshire has it all – graceful Georgian architecture, a river, easy access to the Dales, and good road and rail links

WORDS JOANNA WILLCOX

Tucked away off the A1 in northernmost Yorkshire can be found one of England's finest market towns. Richmond grew up around its Norman castle, in a spectacular position above the River Swale. A kinsman of William the Conqueror built it in 1071 on the 'Riche-Mont', or 'strong hill', to consolidate Norman rule in the north.

A magnificent marketplace developed in medieval times when a dozen or so craft guilds reflected the burgeoning wealth of the town. Richmond's stature was enhanced when it was granted a royal charter to hold markets in 1441 and these continue to this day, every Saturday.

Richmond's heyday was in the 17th and 18th centuries. It became a centre for lead mining and knitted clothes made of wool from the local sheep, both in the outlying Swaledale, and elegant Georgian merchants' houses sprang up. Local society met at the assembly room – now the town hall – and attended the races at the former racecourse. There were military musters, and a theatre built in 1788 added to the lively social scene.

With the arrival in 1825 of Britain's first public railway – between Darlington, just 15 miles north, and Stockton-on-Tees – Richmond eventually had its own branch line in 1846

(closed in 1968), which became invaluable for transporting lead, coal and lime, and attracting tourists to the town. The area is also noted for its military connections: Richmond is the home town of the Green Howards Regiment (visit the fine museum), and Catterick, six miles to the south-east, is England's major northern garrison. This and tourism are now the economic bedrocks of the town.

## Property hotspots

Radiating from the handsome marketplace are plenty of Georgian houses and older stone cottages. Castle Hill, Maison Dieu and



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