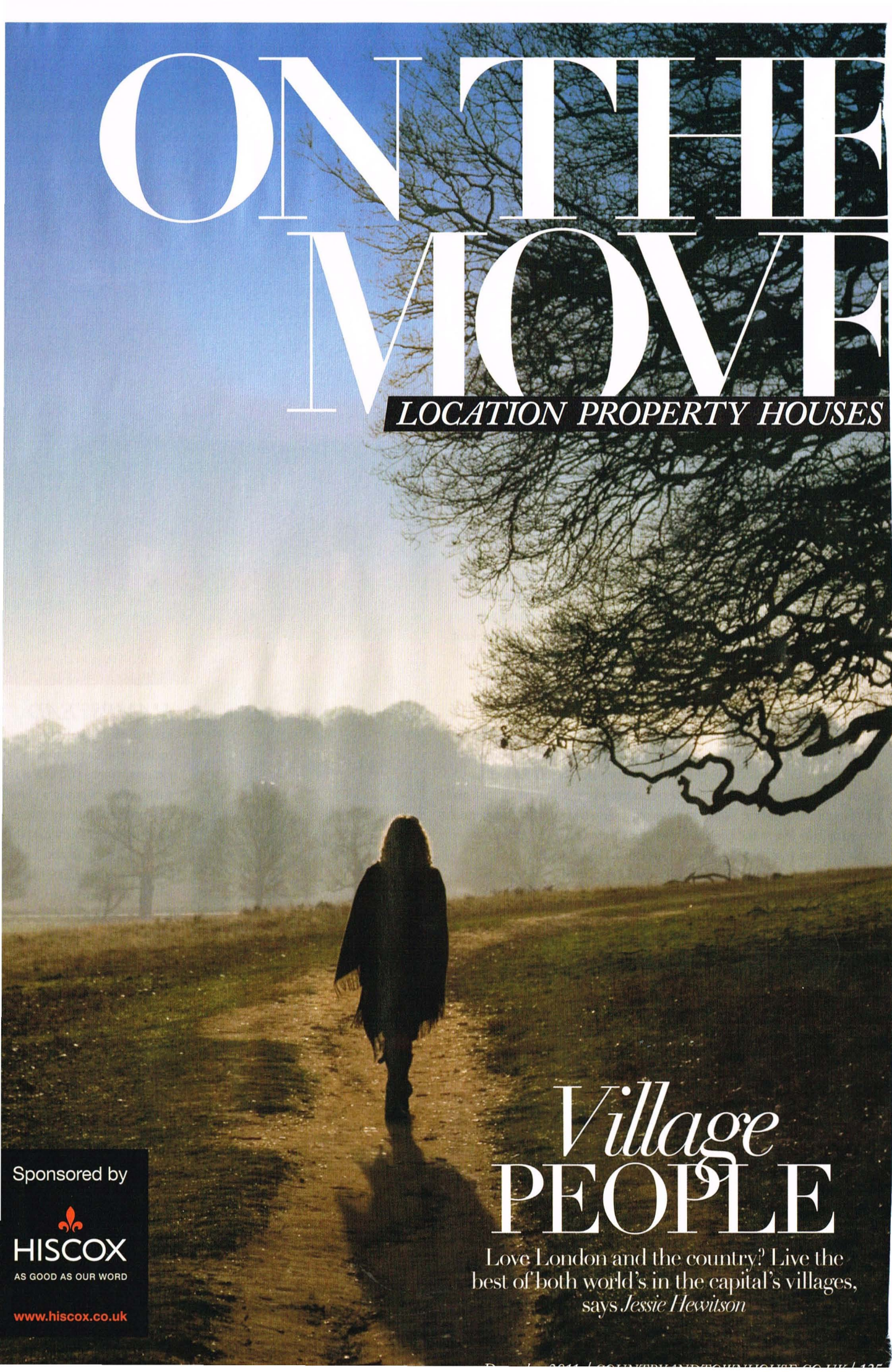


ON THE MOVE

LOCATION PROPERTY HOUSES



Village PEOPLE

Love London and the country? Live the best of both worlds in the capital's villages, says *Jessie Hewitson*

Sponsored by

HISCOX
AS GOOD AS OUR WORD

www.hiscox.co.uk

BARNES

A mini-Richmond, Barnes has both the river and 120 acres of woodland to enjoy. Traditionally, this area has appealed to City workers with school-age children who have been living in Wandsworth or Fulham and are looking for a home with more room to spread out into. The Wetland Centre – designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest – allows young children to learn more about the growing local water vole population and to squelch through a mangrove swamp. It has educational films, a gallery and a cafe. The village also has the obligatory farmers' market and the Bulls Head, a well-known jazz venue that hosts gigs in the back room. Savills (020 8939 6900; savills.co.uk) is selling one of the distinctive double-fronted houses on Castelnau, which backs on to the Wetland Centre, for £5.5m (right). It comes with just under 6,000 sq/ft of space divided into six bedrooms with a 96-foot garden. For something a bit more modest, the agency is also selling an attractive three-bed Victorian house which comes with roof terrace off the main bedroom in a cul-de-sac for £949,950 (below right).



The Wetlands Centre is a big draw for families living in Barnes



CONNAUGHT VILLAGE

Connaught Village – found north of Hyde Park, just off Edgware Road, where the Blairs and Keira Knightley (right) live – has been somewhat under the radar, with many considering it one of London's best-kept secrets. The small independent shops and restaurants – including Casa Maleveo stage house and Coco Maya, the artisan bakery and chocolate shop – add to the village feel. Jimmy Choo reminds you that this is a very wealthy village indeed.

Average property prices, according to Kay & Co (020 7262 2030; kayandco.com), are from £350,000 for a one-bed – this rises to £1m if it overlooks Hyde Park. **The substantial 3,500 sq/ft houses on Connaught Square – where Tony Blair has a house and mews house at back – sell for around £4m to £5m, according to buying agent Jo Eccles, director of Sourcing Property.**

Buyers are a mixture of home-grown and Middle Eastern, comforted by the high-level of security on offer thanks to the former PM living here. The types of property available is varied, ranging from Georgian townhouses and grand white-stucco fronted buildings facing onto garden squares, to pretty mews houses. Kay & Co is selling a four-bedroom mews house in Albion Close for £3.8m (below).



PHOTO: REX FEATURES

MARYLEBONE

Found between Regent's Park and Oxford Street is lovely Marylebone. The high street is one of the best in the country with the Ginger Pig butcher, La Fromagerie, Daunt Books and a weekly farmers' market. The property on offer ranges from apartments within attractive mansion blocks, sweet mews homes and town homes along the streets. The downside is the lack of gardens – outdoor space is a bit of a scarcity in this corner of the capital.

Buyers include downsizers who have lived in areas like Hampstead and Highgate, and Americans, who have followed in the footsteps of Madonna, who has two homes (knocked into one) close by.

A decent two-bed apartment starts at £1m, according to Carter Jonas agency (020 7486 8866; carterjonas.co.uk) – it is selling a two-bed, two-bathroom flat on Welbeck Street on the first floor measuring just under 1,200 sq/ft for £1.85m (below). ■

