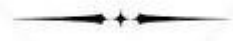


Tidworth



Tidworth is the most "desirable postcode in Britain"

by Jill Harding



THE SP9 postcode – which includes the town of Tidworth and its surrounding villages – has been named the most desirable in England according to Royal Mail.

The company has commissioned a study of the most desirable postcodes to live in England, Scotland and Wales to mark the 40th anniversary of the allocation of postcodes to every address in Britain.

The study, by the Centre for Economic and Business Research (Cebr), calculated the most desirable postcodes based on a range of factors including employment opportunities, health, education, crime rates and housing affordability.

And Tidworth, with its prestigious polo club, and SP9 – which includes many of the attractive villages on Salisbury Plain – came out top.

The GU46 postcode sector covering the Hampshire village of Yateley is the second most desirable in England, the study found. And the Cumbrian seaside resort of St Bees is third.

Steve Rooney, head of Royal Mail's address management unit, said: "The invention of the postcode revolutionised the way post is sorted and delivered.

"As it has evolved, the post codes have also revolutionised the way companies do business.

"The postcode is now used by businesses and individuals in their everyday activities, whether that is verifying a person's address when making a transaction or planning a route on a SatNav system."

(Salisbury Journal – 26 August 2014)

SP9: Britain's most desirable postcode

Quiet town of Tidworth in Wiltshire named as most desirable by study thanks to factors such as health, low crime rates and jobs

By Laurence Dodds



Cricketers in Tidworth, Wiltshire, which was named the most desirable place to live in England Photo: Alamy

It has a listing in the Domesday Book, a well-regarded academy school just down the road and the Prince of Wales as patron of its polo club.

Now the quiet town of Tidworth in Wiltshire has been named the place with the most desirable postcode in England.

The garrison town, home to the Army's 1st Mechanised Brigade and postcode SP9, won thanks to factors such as health, low crime rates and jobs.

The chances for Tidworth's children were boosted in 2009 when Wellington College founded Wiltshire's first academy school there, with the Duke of York as its president.

A detached four-bedroom house that would cost about £700,000 in south London can be bought for less than £300,000 there, while a spacious farm-style five-bedroom home might go for £420,000.

The result came in a Royal Mail study marking the 40th anniversary of the postcode system.

In second place was Yateley in Hampshire, postcode GU46 – a commuter town whose district was named Britain's most desirable in 2011.

An average four-bedroom home there costs nearly £552,000, according to Zoopla, the property website.

St Bees in Cumbria – postcode CA27 – came third, with its Norman priory and clifftop seabird colony. A typical four-bedroom house around St Bees is worth about £314,000. The old Roman town of Middlewich in Cheshire – CW10 – came fourth.

The Welsh list was topped by the picturesque postcode of LL78 on the Isle of Anglesey, and the Scottish by G44 in south Glasgow. The UK currently has about 1.8 million postcodes, which is just a fraction of the 48 million possible alpha-numeric combinations.

The system began in Norwich in 1959 as a way of making address labels read-able by machines.

England's 10 most desirable postcode areas:

1. SP9 – Tidworth, Wiltshire
2. GU46 – Yateley, Hampshire
3. CA27 – St Bees, Cumbria
4. CW10 – Middlewich, east Cheshire
5. RG6 – Earley, Berkshire
6. GU52 – Church Crookham, Hampshire
7. MK8 – north-west Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire
8. CA20 – Gosforth/Seascale, Cumbria
9. DE3 – Mickleover, Derbyshire
10. CA24 – Moor Row, Cumbria

(The Telegraph – 25 August 2014)

Tidworth: what's so desirable about the SP9 postcode?

The Royal Mail has deemed a garrison town in Wiltshire the most attractive place to live in the UK. Sure, it's pretty, but if you don't like polo or James Blunt, its charms may wear thin



Playing polo in Tidworth. Photograph: Alamy

Name: Tidworth.

Age: Old enough to be listed in the Domesday Book.

Appearance: Lush, green, peaceful; the very picture of the English countryside. Also, it contains a decent-sized Lidl.

I know Tidworth! I think I drove through it on the way to Stonehenge. Well, you're a fool for not parking your car and staying there for good.

Why? Because, according to the Royal Mail, Tidworth has the country's most desirable postcode – SP9.

Oh really? Based on what? Based on a complex algorithm involving job opportunities, health, education, crime rates and housing costs.

I'm interested. Tell me more about Tidworth. What do you want to know? That it's primarily a garrison town? That only one major crime took place there between 1990 and 2004? That Prince Charles is the president of its polo club? That the closest anything within its boundaries gets to a negative review online is the paragraph on Tripadvisor calling one of its Indian takeaways "inconsistent"?

You've convinced me. I'll pack my bags now. Not so fast – there's a but.

Is there? Break it to me gently. James Blunt was born there.

Well, that's obviously no good. I'll unpack my bags again. Don't worry, there's always GU46, the Royal Mail's second-most desirable postcode, Yateley in Hampshire.

What's good about Yateley? It's delightful. It's a former coaching hub that lies between London and Reading, with good transport links, an annual May Fayre and a decent-sized Waitrose. The whole place looks like a picture postcard.

There's another but coming, isn't there? Its most famous resident was David Copeland, the man who subjected London's black, gay and Asian communities to a two-week nailbombing campaign in 1999.

Well, I don't much care for the sound of that, either. Then stay where you are. After all, nowhere's perfect. Besides, this list is just a publicity stunt for the 40th anniversary of the postcode, and you shouldn't read too much into it. Especially when it's this biased towards small, wealthy, sterile-sounding and predominately white communities in the south of England.

Do say: "Let's all move to Tidworth!"

Don't say: "And let's take our chronically ill, unemployed burglar friends with us!"

(The Guardian – 25 August 2014)
