

THE MODERN HOUSE



Orford Road, London E17
£1,000,000 Freehold

The Arbour

Last remaining unit.

These exquisite sustainable houses form part of The Arbour in Walthamstow Village, the UK's market-leading regenerative residential development. Both set over two floors and each with a private courtyard garden, these houses combine tactile materiality, unexpected volumes, and cleverly conceived layouts. The surrounding landscaping has been thoughtfully planted and includes room for residents to grow fruit and vegetables as well as enjoy a communal outdoor kitchen set beneath a striking archway. There are two three-bedroom houses available. Walthamstow station is a five-minute walk away.

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Environmental Performance

Designs with such an intense focus on sustainability and reuse are rare. Working with any materials they could salvage from this former industrial site, GS8 have fashioned the first carbon-negative, zero-waste, energy self-sufficient homes in the UK. Exacting attention to detail is coupled with a thoughtful approach to recycling materials. Excavated earth has been used internally to make beautifully tactile bricks with clay mortar. The landscaping and thoroughfares are formed from recycled aggregates and concrete from the original site. Reclaimed steel creates a striking communal garden kitchen at the centre of the scheme, bound by beautiful raised beds that are filled with the edible planting that runs throughout the site.

Each house has been built to an exceptional standard of fabric efficiency, exceeding that which is required by Passivhaus standards. Carefully placed glazing is screened by sculptural brise soleil to ensure a consistent internal temperature year round. As such, the houses require very little heating; that which is required is supplied by an air source heat pump. Photovoltaic panels, placed on the roofs of the houses, are designed to oversupply the power needed by each home and to feed back to the grid. The houses are also fully deconstructable and all of their elements can be recycled.

The Tour

The Arbour is a private mews, approached from Orford Road. Set behind a gate, characterful cobblestones give way to lime render walkways, bordered by a lush planting scheme of largely edible plants. The rise and fall of the roof lines create an eye-catching approach, softened by striking grey wooden façades.

Each house has an open plan living configuration on the ground floor. Kitchens have been cleverly crafted to ensure versatility and there is scope for further customisation. Birch ply fronts are complemented by Foresso, an ingenious new worktop material pioneered on site using timber chippings. These beautiful surfaces, made from timber offcuts set in resin, reuse materials and each have a unique patina along with being water- and heat-resistant.

Lime screed floors sit alongside earth bricks, made on site from excavated earth from the foundations. Together with the birch ply walls, these varied materials create a tactile, natural palette which plays beautifully against the greenery of the rear courtyards. Generous living spaces open to gardens through wide, wooden-framed triple-glazed doors. One of the houses also has a winter garden with a pitched glass roof shaded by a brise soleil.

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Both houses have three bedrooms and two bathrooms with slightly different configurations. They also share incredibly voluminous stairwells where towering ceiling heights are accentuated by walls of earth brick, 35,000 of which were produced on site as part of the build. Generously sized double bedrooms overlook the gardens to the rear. Deep built-in wardrobes can be customised in a variety of configurations. The angular roof lines of the exterior create shifting volumes internally.

The bathrooms have been carefully finished with lime plaster walls and low-flow matte black fixtures and fittings. The tiles are a combination of 8mm Italian porcelain, which contains a minimum of 40% recycled material, and Smile Plastic tiles, which use recycled yoghurt pots to create a playful pearlescent finish.

There are two cupboards off each landing housing the MVHR systems, hot water storage and photovoltaic panel batteries. These cupboards have been carefully configured to ensure they still serve as helpful storage space. Ground floor cupboards beneath the stairs can serve either as coat storage or useful utility space.

There are dedicated bike sheds for each house and a shared reuse centre for residents to stow infrequently used things like ladders. There is also a residents' car club, which includes access to an electric Nissan parked within the front gates.

Outdoor Space

Each house has a private courtyard garden bound at the rear by the original Victorian garden wall, with its beautifully aged patina. These quiet green oases sit in the shade of the neighbouring trees and are planted with ferns and hellebores. Accessed through wide sliding doors in the living room, these outdoor spaces serve as extensions of the living rooms and can be opened to create a peaceful through breeze.

Residents also share use of the communal garden which sits beneath an angular roofline built with reclaimed steel purlins. This beautiful sitting area is surrounded by planting and has two barbecues, and is a perfect sociable spot on summer evenings.

The Area

Walthamstow Village is home to numerous independent shops, including the famous Eat-17 deli and the William Morris Gallery in Lloyd Park. Close by is Bell Corner, home to The Bell pub, which has good food and a heated garden, and vegetarian café Buhler and Co, which serves brunch and great coffee.

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St James Street is a 20-minute walk away, where locals drink at Pillars Brewery in the lively Crate development, which also houses popular eateries such as the vegan Green Grill and Italian Bakery pizzeria. The area is served by a range of independent shops and cafés, including Greener Habits zero-waste shop, Borrowed Light floral studio, and the hairdressers Cove17 and No Logo. The playroom at The Mill community centre is a popular meeting place for families, yoga classes and local groups. There's also an active local arts scene, with murals by world-renowned street artists ROA and ATM, and the locally-run 1b Window gallery.

Walthamstow Central (Victoria Line and Overground) is around a five-minute walk away, with trains running into Liverpool Street and central London in under 20 minutes. St James Street (overground) is a 20-minute walk away and runs trains to Liverpool Street in under 20 minutes.

Tenure: Freehold Service Charge: approx. £1,750 per annum Council Tax Band: awaiting assessment

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About

The Modern House is an estate agency that helps people live in more thoughtful and beautiful ways. We believe in design as a powerful force for good. Inspired by the principles of modernism, we represent design-led homes across the UK which celebrate light, space and a truth to materials. Esquire credits The Modern House with “rewriting the rulebook on estate agency” and GQ voted us “one of the best things in the world”.