

Western Gazette

Bristol named as best city to live in the UK by Sunday Times

By [WG Sherborne](#) | Posted: March 22, 2014



Bristol Harbour Festival

LONDON may fancy itself as the coolest kid on the block but the West Country's capital Bristol has been crowned the best city in the UK.

Bristol beat 63 cities to win the top accolade and came above rivals such as London, Birmingham and Manchester.

Judges praised everything from the "buzzy" culture to the beautiful countryside before placing it as the number one city in the Sunday Times Best Places to Live in Britain list, where it joins Monmouth at the top table.

Judges said: "From Brunel to Banksy, via a great choice of housing, a revitalised harbour and excellent transport links, Bristol's got the lot."

In recent years the city has shrugged off an unsophisticated country bumpkin image to become known as one of the country's most vibrant.

From Banksy to drum 'n' bass, Bristol has built up a reputation as a trendy place for young people to live and was at the forefront of the foodie revival. And whereas couples once moved out as soon as the kids hit a certain age, the city has managed to stem the exodus of families by shrugging off its reputation for having a failing education system.

It is also ideally located for residents to enjoy the benefits of being close to the capital, rolling Cotswolds countryside and some of the UK's best beaches. Judges also praised one of the lowest unemployment rates in the country and varied and beautiful housing stock.

"While nearby Bath is all bonnets and bows, Bristol sees itself as rather more gritty — after all, this is Banksy's home town," said the Sunday Times. "There is something for everyone: Broadmead and Cabot Circus provide 500 shops in the centre (and there's an Ikea in Eastville); it's home to two universities, it's just been voted European Green Capital 2015 and there's a thriving art and music scene.

"The revamped harbour is buzzing with shops, restaurants and galleries — and, if you need even more, there are two mainline stations, an airport and the M4 leading to London and south Wales."

It adds: "Clifton, at the top of the hill by Brunel's suspension bridge, provides Georgian gentility and a villagey atmosphere — at a price : two-bedroom flats start at £280,000, while a town house is £1 million. Montpelier has a more self-consciously hipster vibe, without the out-and-out edginess of some of Bristol's less salubrious areas, and the Tobacco Factory building in Southville offers office space for "creatives", as well as a popular café-bar and Sunday market.

"If you want a quieter life, the leafy suburbs of Stoke Bishop, Westbury and Redland are popular: a semi here is £650,000."

It is the first time the guide has featured a city guide and editor Helen Davies said: "Many of us already live in a city and even more of us are predicted to make our home in one in the next decade. The urban lifestyle appeals to almost everyone."

Bristol is well known for its festival scene and there is one almost every weekend in the summer.

Read more: <http://www.westerngazette.co.uk/Bristol-named-best-city-live-UK-Sunday-Times/story-20842484-detail/story.html#ixzz2wtF2yb1h>