

Affordable homes **Homes & Property**

## The art at the heart of the sporting legacy

Views over waterways will attract young buyers to artists' studios in the Lea Valley, says **Tom Lewis**

**A** NEW BRIDGE across the River Lea in Bow, east London, is the latest example of regeneration rippling from Stratford's Olympic zone. Industrial areas previously off homebuyers' radar are being opened up. And though it does take an imaginative leap of faith, now is a good time to put down roots in these districts, ahead of the Games when the glare of publicity and the "legacy benefits" are expected to boost property values.

One such place is the **Lea Valley**, where the River Lea and a cleaned-up canal route flow past Victoria Park and Hackney Marshes before reaching the nature reserves and giant reservoirs at Tottenham Hale.

Industrial eyesores remain, yet this is a remarkably green swathe of the capital, with parks and unexpected conservation areas.

On the site of a factory where Matchbox toys were once made is a new scheme of 209 new flats and 49 permanent purpose-built artists' studios and commercial space. The apartment buildings include a 14-storey tower with impressive views.

The development is an alliance between Telford Homes and Acme, a housing charity that provides affordable workspace for artists.

Called **Matchmakers Wharf**, the new homes flank a canal and are a mix of 138 private-sale flats, shared-ownership and rented accommodation – from studios to

**£190,000** by the Lea Navigation canal is Matchmakers Wharf (where the toy cars were once made), now becoming a 138-home scheme with artists' studios to rent. Visit [telfordhomes.plc.uk](http://telfordhomes.plc.uk).

**£175,000** 132 apartments by the River Lea at Paradise Park, named after the Victorian dock on the site. The development includes rescued listed buildings and new homes with terraces over the canal. Call 0845 838 2088



four-bedroom apartments, designed with "care and flair", according to a government planning inspector.

The artists' studios on the site may well add value to the private homes and the location is part of a wider £40 billion investment zone spreading from the Olympic Park.

Completion is imminent. To register, visit [telfordhomes.plc.uk](http://telfordhomes.plc.uk). Prices from £190,000. Shared

ownership homes will be sold through London & Quadrant.

**Paradise Park**, 132 apartments on a 2.5-acre site by the River Lea and picturesque Millfields recreation ground, sounds like a marketeer's creation but takes its name from a Victorian dock built to serve a glass works, an Indian rubber factory and carbolic acid plant. These factories have long since gone, but the rescued listed buildings have been converted into work studios while one has become a museum. New apartment blocks overlook a "mock" dock and have decked terraces over the water.

Next to the development are two waterside pubs, one a Sunday jazz venue. Prices start at £175,000 for a one-bedroom flat.

"Most buyers are surprised at what they find – the greenery, the river and the local amenities," says Giles Underhill of developer Vision Homes. Call 0845 838 2088 or visit [visionhomes.co.uk](http://visionhomes.co.uk).

For more information visit [www.acme.org.uk/futurestudios.php](http://www.acme.org.uk/futurestudios.php)