



Ayot Montfitchet | Ayot St Peter | Herts

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*One of Hertfordshire's
finest private residences*



Exquisite! Ayot Montfitchet is a beautifully restored Grade II listed residence that reputedly dates from 1485 (as a Hall House) with later Jacobean and more recent additions.

It combines various period styles which, put together, provide all that is best of a classical English country house. A beautiful and private setting, combined with the highest standards of architecture and an array of unique features, lend Ayot Montfitchet a tranquil and timeless air.

The principal house is accompanied by a delightful estate: the nearby courtyard includes a staff cottage, two flats, garages, stables and other outbuildings, and there is also the detached Gardener's Cottage – all lying in beautiful landscaped gardens and grounds of over 27 acres, set in some of Hertfordshire's most attractive countryside.

The Principal House

Ayot Montfitchet's long history has left it full of wonderful architectural details such as stone archways, screens, and a number of fireplaces.

The contrasting but complimentary styles exhibited, for example, by the 1615 minstrels gallery and in the three main staircases, make exploring the house a real delight, as do hidden treasures such as the bathroom behind a bookcase and the old well beneath the library.

There are far too many rooms to describe individually here: please consult the floor plans and accompanying photographs for a sense of what this most elegant home has to offer.





It Is Steeped In History

Ayot Montfitchet was, until renamed recently following very extensive works to the house and its gardens, called **Ayot Place**.

The earliest part of the house, an open hall, dates from around 1485 – the year of the Battle of Bosworth and the founding of the Tudor dynasty on the English throne. It was possibly built by John Fyshe, who enjoyed it for some few years before his murder in 1494. It is thought that his family would have lived upstairs, with their livestock driven into the lower hall at night.

Later important work was likely carried out by Sir George Perient in 1615, for the hall sports a minstrels' gallery with a frieze bearing that date in the middle, before the house as settled by John Garrard of Lamer Park upon his son, also John, in 1618. Indeed, much of what we see today very likely dates from the 17th Century: William Hales, a later owner, very likely added the cross wing north of the hall, and he is recorded as having paid for new hearths too.

In 1832 a later William Hales of King's Walden sold Ayot Place to Viscount Melbourne, and it became a tenant farm of the Bocket Estate.



In subsequent years, successive owners have provided great care and attention to the house, allowing it to adapt to the needs and desires of its occupiers. Further changes were made in the late 19th and early 20th Centuries to transform the property into a Tudor style mansion.

By the mid-1990s, the property needed modernising and it was remodelled under the supervision of the architect David Postins. Very extensive works were carried out and as it is a Grade II listed building; the greatest care had to be taken to ensure that the new works were complimentary and satisfied the heritage bodies. Indeed, it is now very difficult to distinguish the recent works from the original.

Today it is an unreservedly comfortable and gracious home, providing the perfect country retreat far away from the demands of the outside world. Each room has its own character, from the soaring great hall with its Tudor arched fireplace, linenfold panelling and minstrel's gallery, the classicism of the 18th-century breakfast room with its wainscoting and marble fireplace, to the crisp modernity of the principal bedroom suite with its Edwardian style bathroom and Biedermeier dressing room. The kitchen/breakfast room and servery were remodelled in a traditional style featuring bespoke cabinets and a comprehensive range of integrated appliances, complemented by a large walk-in pantry.







The Courtyard



Set around three sides of this spacious courtyard, which centres on a most attractive clock tower and a Grade II listed dovecot, are the handsome redbrick outbuildings.

Not only does one of these contain an extensive home gym, but it also has lapsed planning permission for an indoor swimming pool and thus offers an excellent prospect for further development.

Another houses **Courtyard Cottage**, giving additional accommodation for staff or a potential guesthouse, this contains a sitting room, kitchen/breakfast room, bathroom, and two bedrooms.

There are also **two more flats**: the ground floor one sports a kitchen, sitting room, bathroom, and two bedrooms; and the first floor one another kitchen/breakfast room, bathroom, and two bedrooms.

Beyond that, the courtyard buildings include: four garages (including one with heating and an inspection pit for the real petrol head); an estate office with shower; the gardener’s office, which leads into the greenhouse, potting shed, six storerooms, and a WC; the gardener’s workshop; stabling with three loose boxes; a tack room; and a laundry room. There is also a large hay loft.



Ayot Montfitchet



The house is approached through wrought iron gates, set in a quiet country lane. The visitor then follows a graceful, tree-lined carriage drive past a cathedral of lime trees and the ornamental lake and boathouse, before rising to the front door.

The house itself is enclosed by elegant and well-maintained grounds which give it a secluded and intimate feel.



Gardener’s Cottage

South of the houses lies this charming brick-and-tile residence, which is well-suited either for staff or entertaining visitors and guests.

Inside it boasts a fully-fitted kitchen, a dining room with a wonderful flagstone floor, a sitting room with a fireplace, and another family room. On the two floors above are a bathroom, three bedrooms, and two loft rooms.



EPC Ratings

- 1 Courtyard Cottage E
- 2 Courtyard Cottage D
- Ayot Montfitchet D
- The Garden Cottage F



Gardens & Grounds

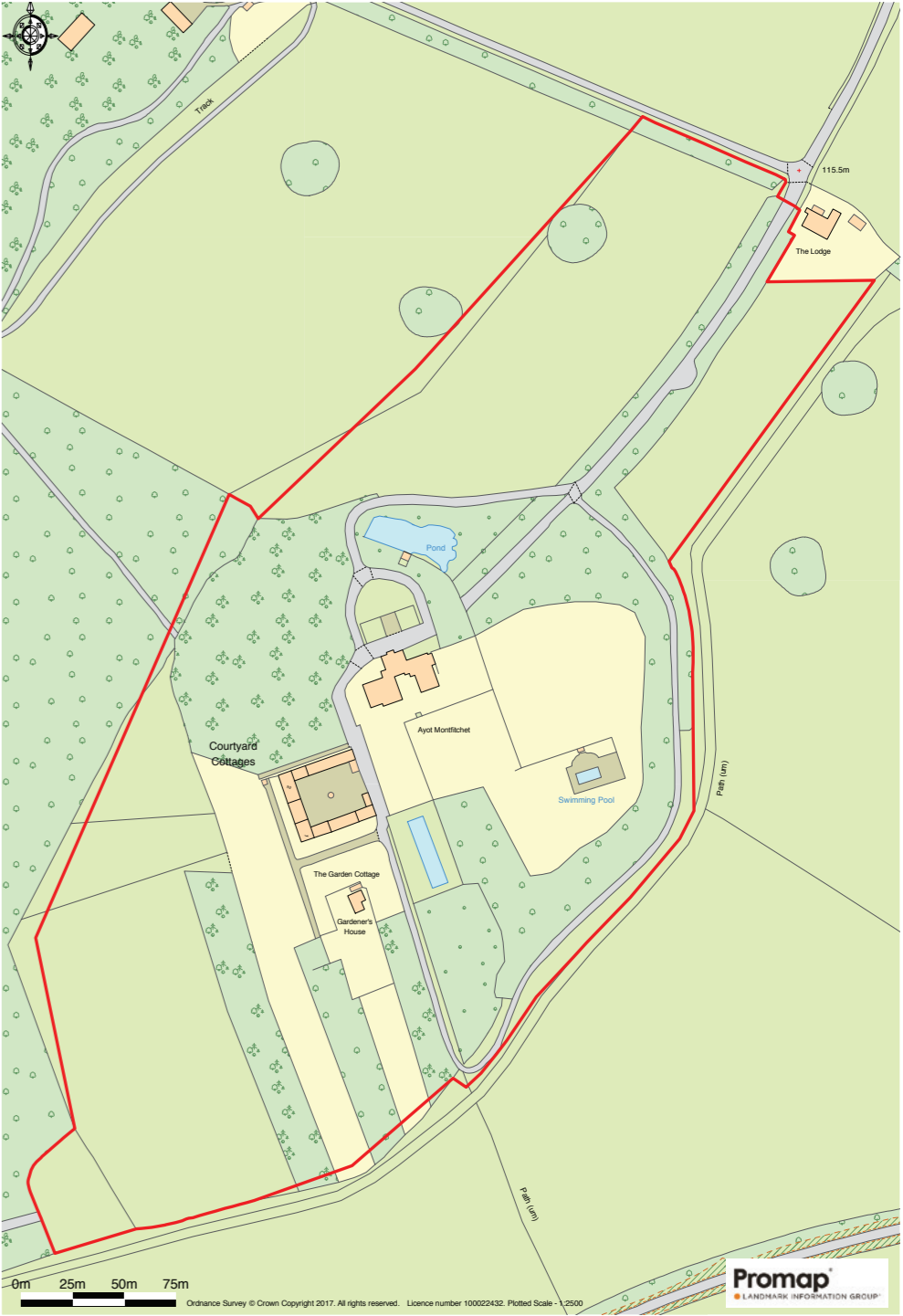
Just like the house, the grounds of Ayot Montfitchet are steeped in history. It’s now difficult to peel back the layers and tell when each part was laid out, but the different elements come together beautifully to create a unique setting for this special home. A house for all seasons, as the photographs (taken at various times of year) demonstrate.

The grounds are split between formal and more informal areas, with formal gardens in the immediate surroundings of the house and then less formal areas further out. This diverse arrangement hosts a wide array of charming features, all of which are beautifully maintained by the on-site gardener. These include: an ‘Arts and Crafts’ brick boathouse, set into the outer wall and facing out across the ornamental lake onto the drive; a lime tree cathedral, similar to that in Whipsnade, and ‘romantic garden’; a croquet lawn flanked by two Grade II listed 17th Century walls; formal and ‘sundial’ lawns; and a rose garden with fountain. Beyond an avenue of ancient yew trees lies a yew hedge, and beyond that lies a reflection pool enclosed by pleached lime trees and accessed through an arch in the hedge. Farther out still is the orchard, which contains apple, pear, plum, and cherry trees.

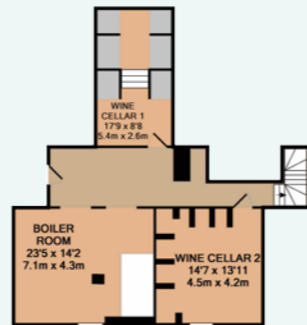
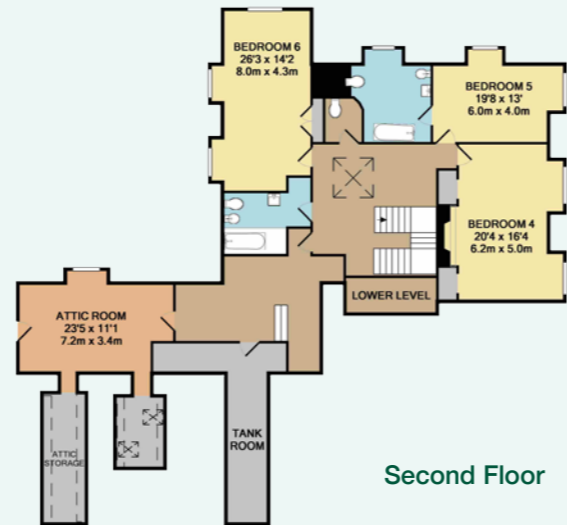
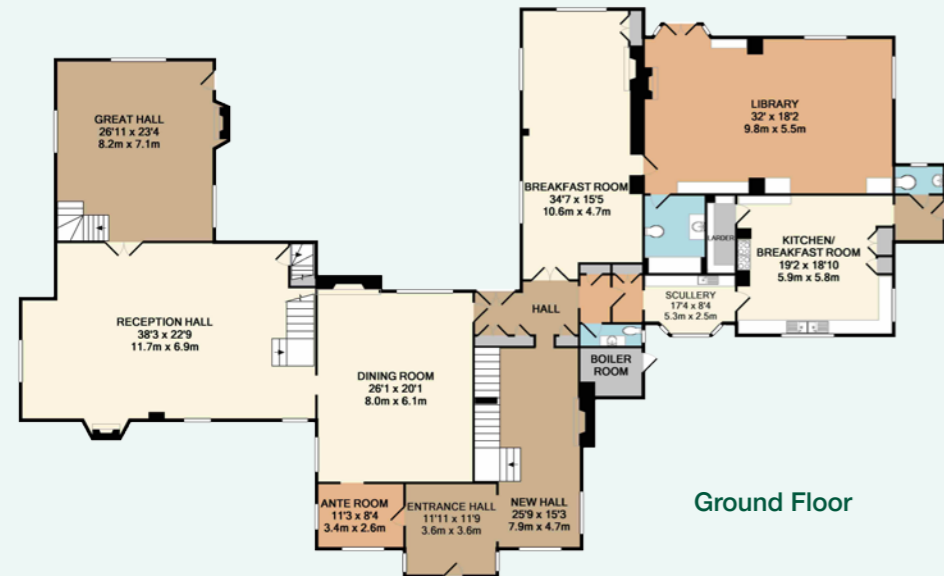
Through another wrought-iron gate, beyond the croquet lawn and past a delightful wildflower meadow, lies the Art Deco-styled outdoor swimming pool. This is heated and sports a charming mosaic tile pattern, and is enclosed by a yew hedge and redbrick wall. There are also two pavilions, one of which contains the changing room, shower, and WC, and beyond the pool lies an arboretum containing many fine specimens of trees. Beside the Gardener’s Cottage, meanwhile, is a rhododendron walk, which leads to a traditional kitchen garden and beyond that, a paddock.

These formal gardens are set in extensive mown parkland, in which there are more notable tree specimens. These have been under-planted with spring bulbs. All of this can be maintained all year round thanks to the installation of an extensive irrigation system.

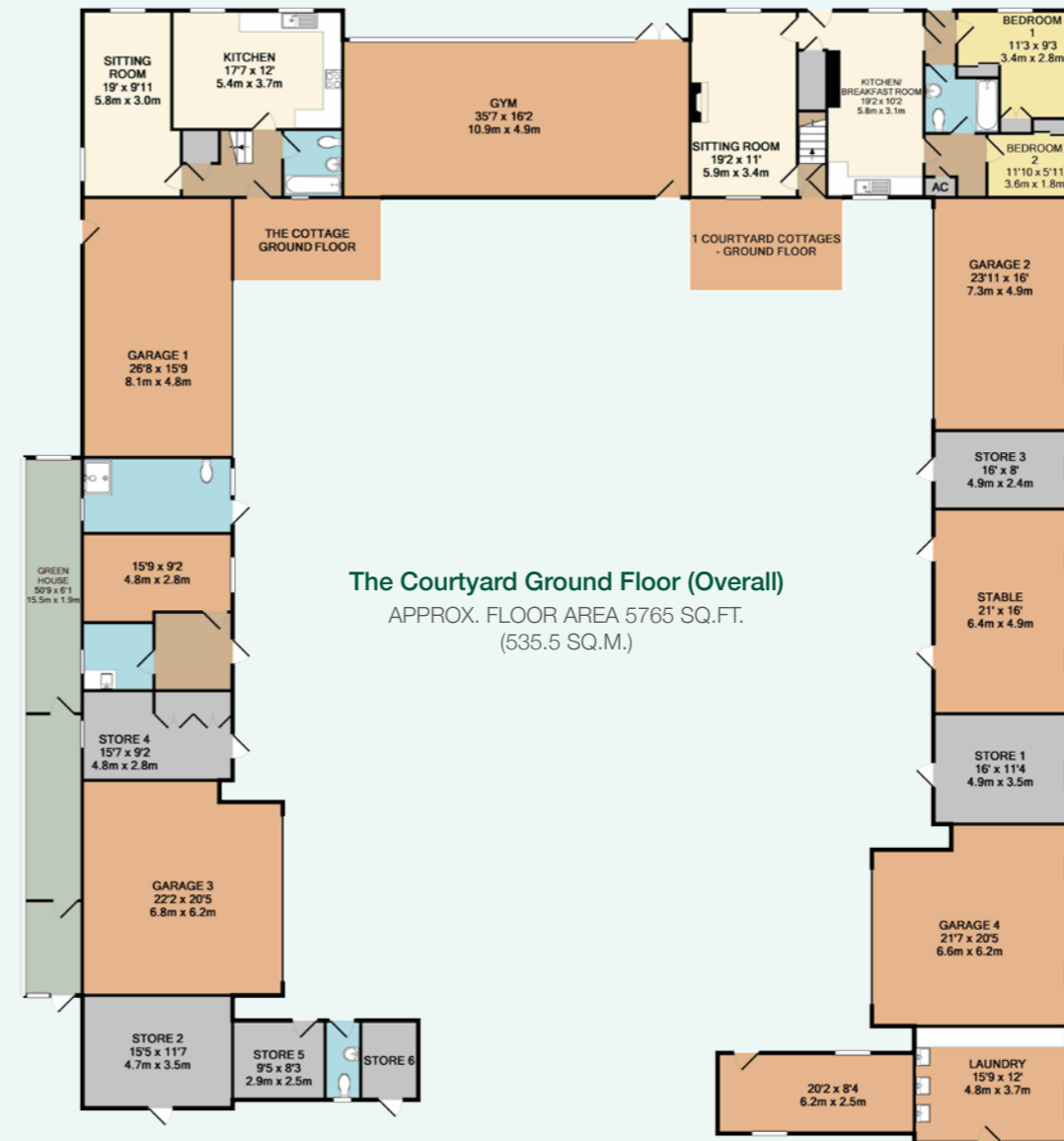




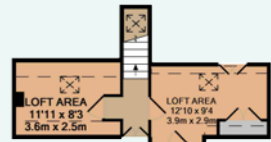
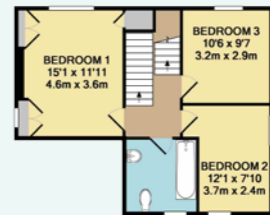
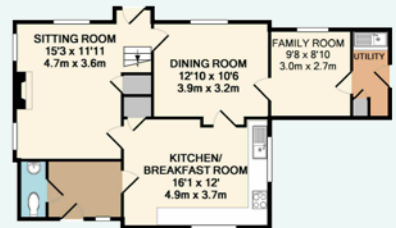
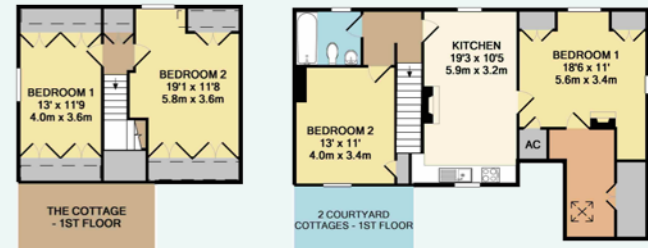
Floor Plans



Total Approx Floor Area 12495 SQ. FT (1150.8 SQ.M.)



Total Approx Floor Area 8739 SQ. FT (811.8 SQ.M.)





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