



# Coach House

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THE COURTYARD  
THE GREAT CHURCHYARD  
BURY ST EDMUNDS  
SUFFOLK









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# INTRODUCTION


A covetable converted coach house nestled amidst the ancient Benedictine abbey garden ruins & the Georgian houses of The West Front, located in the heart of historic Bury St Edmunds.

Discreetly concealed behind a solid gated entrance and arched pedestrian doorway, built into the architecturally acclaimed Cathedral precinct West Front restoration, you catch a welcome glimpse of what is to come. In the distance the Coach House glistens in the evening sun across a charming private residents cobbled courtyard.

Behind its handsome brick and flint facade, the detached property was in a truly dilapidated state prior to its first phase of renovations in the mid-90s. The current homeowners have since breathed new life into the Coach House: the transformation of a two-bedroom period quintessential English mews cottage. Lovingly designed by Fred Grzyb, who is an Emmy award-winning costumer, having worked for the New York City Opera and the New York City Ballet, and Jo Ellen Grzyb, a keen gardener, writer, entrepreneur and founding director of Impact Factory whose clients include ING, Hoffman La-Roche and Ernst & Young to name but a few.

The home is a reference point for cleverly conceived storage nooks and maximisation of habitable spaces. All at the same time dressed in timeless interiors that showcase the couple's eclectic curated collection of art and antiques, accumulated along their travels and from having lived in various places across the globe. It was essential that the property would retain its period charm while accommodating modern day living. The result is a warm and cosy feel. Lighting sets the tone throughout. Of particular note is the volume and configuration of individual spaces. Open-plan, yet not quite so with its glazed room divisions. Lofty, yet cocooning with its gentle vaulted upper floor.

Moreover, wherever you are perched in the house, there are incredible evergreen views to the outside that provide endless vistas - each one a photo frame in their own right - with window heights set to levels that give complete privacy.



*A welcome glimpse of the Coach House across the courtyard.*





*The home is a reference point for cleverly conceived storage nooks and maximisation of habitable spaces.*

- James Sawyer, Director of Whatley Lane





DOWNSTAIRS

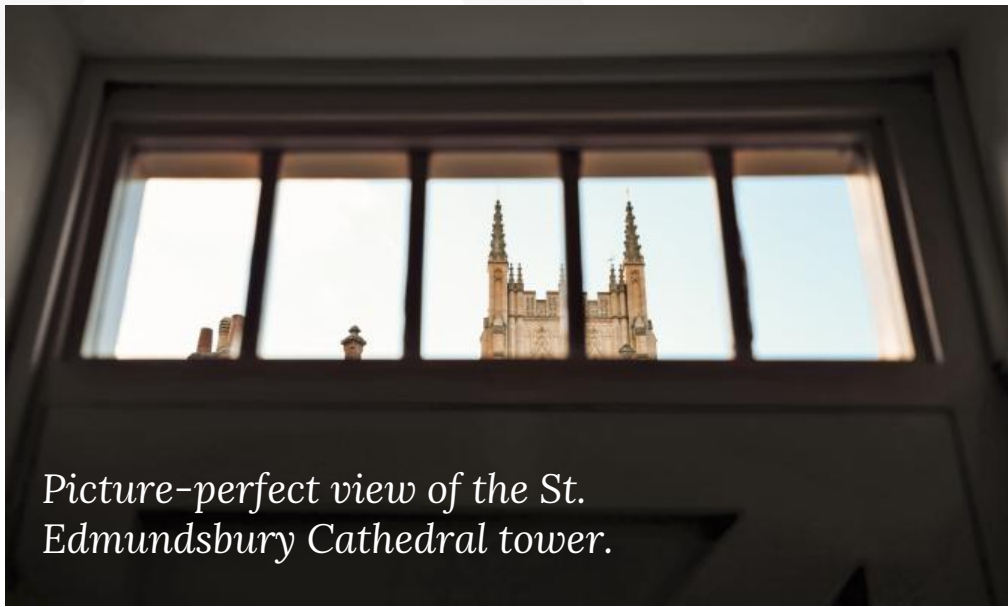


Picture-perfect evergreen views and cathedral vistas chime with the curated curiosities contained within.

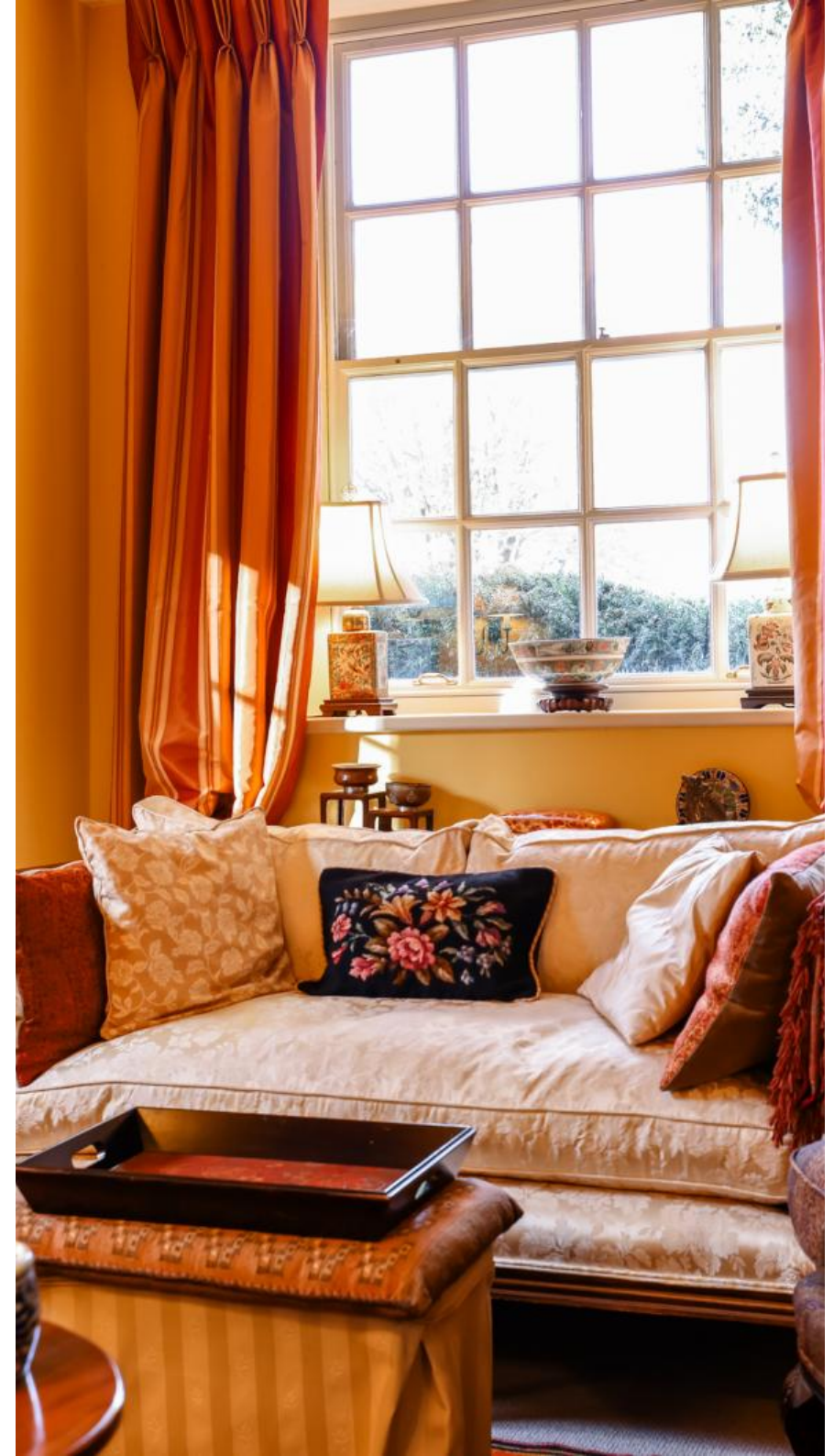
Enter through a panelled door with a fanlight, so placed as if to anoint you each day with a picture-perfect view of the majestic Cathedral tower. Handcrafted cabinetry has been fashioned to create the ideal boot room vestibule space with open display storage above.

The former integral garage section of the property now incorporates a window where the large coach doors once hung giving pleasing symmetry to the exterior frontage whilst internally a cleverly re-configured dual aspect sitting room invites you to stay. The space is altogether elevated by Fred's theatrical touch from enclosing a pair of solid double doors with bookcases either side as you walk through the opening from the hallway.

From within, a door opens to a cloakroom, which, like the shower room above, has a classic contemporary aesthetic with its black and white chequer floor tiles. The vanity basin glows with a pair of wall lights. A curtain pulls back to reveal a useful utility area.



*Picture-perfect view of the St. Edmundsbury Cathedral tower.*











*A hidden room discovered during refurbishment; now a useful pantry.*

Exposed brick floors of eye-catching locally baked 'Woolpit whites' - it is even thought that the first White House in America was constructed of Woolpit bricks - flow through the hall, dining and kitchen spaces and allude to the property's utilitarian origin. Both practical and delicate, festooned with rugs to give a cossetting feel.

A light-filled kitchen, made so by a newly inserted south-facing window above the hob, now enjoys views of a magical Larch tree and a monumental fragment of the abbey ruins. During refurbishment the homeowners discovered a hidden room, now put to best use as a well-stocked kitchen pantry that reminisces a scene out of *The Borrowers*.

The kitchen is arranged in a u-shape with cabinetry painted in a Portland Stone hue topped with granite work surfaces. Integrated appliances include: dishwasher, fridge/freezer, combi-oven and grill and five ring gas burner. Open-plan to a large dining area, yet cleverly divided by a glazed partition with a decorative trefoil motif denoting the property's religious situation within the Cathedral precinct. The west-facing window looks out onto the picturesque courtyard and is framed further by a skilfully arranged bookcase.















UPSTAIRS



The double-height staircase ascends a gallery of wall art leading to two vaulted bedrooms.

The bespoke double-height staircase takes centre stage and is made further uplifting by the homeowners' use of a gallery wall of art. There is a sculptural niche carved out of one wall and a window through to the Abbey gardens that basks the space in morning sunlight. A pair of mirroring glazed arched doorcases accentuate the ceiling heights and carry through to the vaulted bedrooms - a well-considered design element that nods to Fred's past life.

The principal bedroom suite evokes the feeling and look of a boutique hotel. Its large proportions accommodate a four-poster bed and capacious study/library area with inspiring views, while the other bedroom has a pleasing dual aspect shadow play of evening light. Handcrafted cabinetry is employed by way of fitted wardrobes and bookcases.

When redesigning the interiors certain considerations were pivotal: *'We were sensitive to how the space interacts and complements the local landscape and feel we have achieved this'* Fred comments.







*The vaulted upper  
foor accommodates  
an elegant four  
poster bed.*





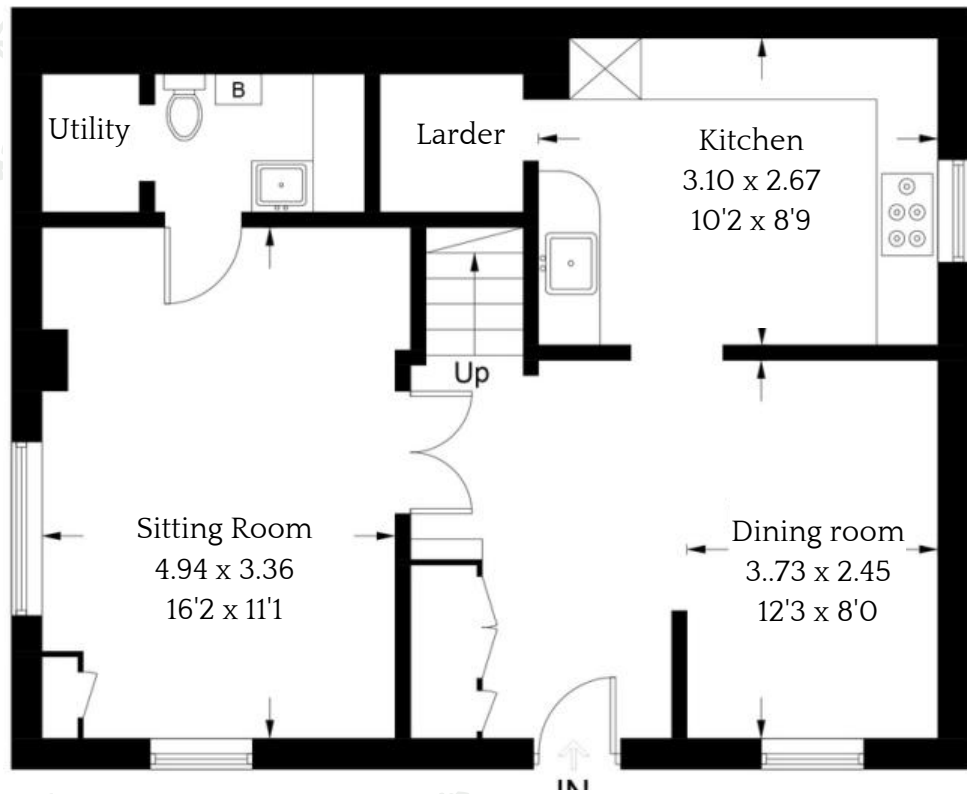
*The shower room has a classic contemporary aesthetic with their black and white chequer floor tiles.*



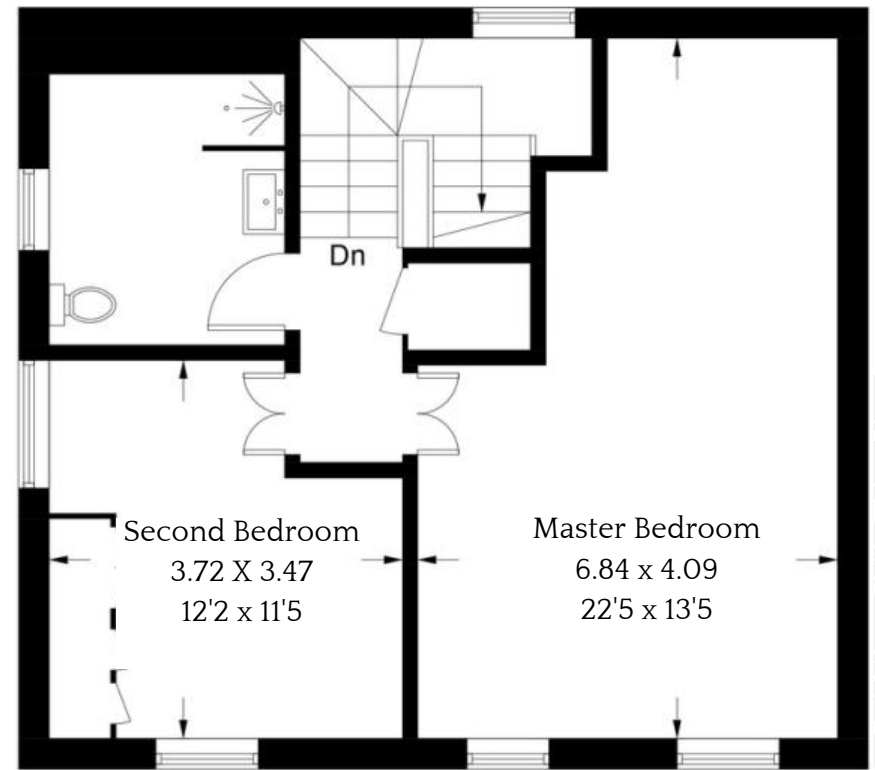




# FLOORPLAN



Ground Floor



First Floor

Approximate Gross Internal Area (GIA) | 110.1 sq m or 1,185 sq ft







# THE GREAT OUTDOORS

Unique, serene, discreet and convenient courtyard setting in the epicentre of Bury St. Edmunds.

While there is no formal garden, you are surrounded by the Abbey Gardens to the north, east and south. St James Cathedral tower soars to the west.

The courtyard offers a calm, quiet sanctuary from the hustle and bustle of the nearby thriving market town centre. Its unique situation is further enhanced by a low-level flint wall that provides glorious views over the adjacent manicured rose garden parterre.

*'It's as if being surrounded by stately parkland without the cost of maintaining it'*  
- Jo-Ellen remarks.

The homeowners have created a pleasant cottage garden of potted planting to the front that has been well-received by many guests as a celebrated recent fixture in Bury St Edmunds Hidden Gardens event. The property utilises Zone F residents' parking permits for two cars and vehicle access to the front courtyard is permitted for unloading.





# LOCATION











# PROVENANCE

The property's chequered history began life as a coach house in the 1850s and likely served the then registry office located in the northern section of the ancient St Edmundsbury abbey West Front during Victorian times. Having laid derelict and abandoned for many years thereafter and at one point known to be a house of ill repute, it found a new lease of life following conversion to a residential dwelling in 1995.

It then became home to the late Sir Eldon Griffiths, who was MP for Bury St Edmunds. Over the last three years a complete programme of refurbishment has transformed the Coach House into a masterclass in period cottage living.



# homeowner

## THE INTERVIEW

Fred and Jo Ellen Grzyb share their honest experience with James Sawyer of Whatley Lane.



Fred Grzyb



Jo Ellen Grzyb

**WL: What most attracted you to the Coach House?**

FG: Having lived at 4 The West Front previously it was all about returning to wonderful neighbours and friends and of course being between the Cathedral and the Abbey Gardens.

JEG: The setting is just fantastic and I love that the Abbey Gardens are right there. The space itself is absolutely perfect for our life-style. It's so peaceful and calm and yet literally a two minute walk to the heart of the town.

**WL: What is your greatest achievement with the refurbishment?**

FG: Restoring old windows and adding new ones bringing in light and air and a true sense of expansiveness.

JEG: Having a vision that others doubted and seeing it to fruition. It's even better than we originally imagined.

**WL: What's important to you when you're working on a home?**

FG: Planning for a loo on every floor!

JEG: To make a warm and welcoming environment; a feeling of intimacy and serenity.

**WL: What's your favourite room and why?**

FG: The stairwell landing, with the window overlooking the Abbey Gardens and the sun pouring in the morning. Reading my newspaper and enjoying the view.

JEG: Every room has a unique personality but as I work from home in the bedroom/office I especially enjoy the sense of space, the ease of working at my desk and the lovely view of the Cathedral and the Rose Garden.

**WL: What is your favourite object of affection?**

FG: Jo-Ellen.

JEG: Fred.

**WL: In the event of a house fire, what would you save and why?**

FG: Jo-Ellen

JEG: Fred.

**WL: What's your best antique find?**

FG: 18th Century gaming table that transforms from circular to demi-lune.

JEG: There's so much I love, but if I have to choose - my Georgian desk that I work at every day and my Victorian secretary we've had since we got married 56 years ago.

**WL: How would you describe your interior style?**

FG: Any style that contains objects that hold a memory because without memories there is no life.

JEG: I'm very self-reflective and insightful; but seriously folks, my style is very eclectic and every room must have books. My books are a reflection of my history.

**WL: Is there anywhere else you'd like to have a home?**

FG: Mexico.

JEG: We have a little house in Greece and that's good enough for me.

—  
END



# AGENT'S NOTES:

## TENURE

The property is available for sale by private treaty on a leasehold basis. The unexpired lease term is for 97 years, commencing 31/05/1996 and ending 26/10/2121. For ground rent and service charge details, please contact agent.

## RIGHTS OF WAY, WAYEAVES & EASEMENTS

The sale is subject to all rights or support, public and private rights of way, water rights, drainage and other easements, quasi-easements and wayleaves, all or any other rights, whether mentioned in these particulars or not. In the case of the courtyard there is shared access in place.



## SERVICES

Mains water, electricity, gas-fired central heating. Private drainage. It is assumed all are connected, as none of these services have been tested.

## LOCAL AUTHORITY

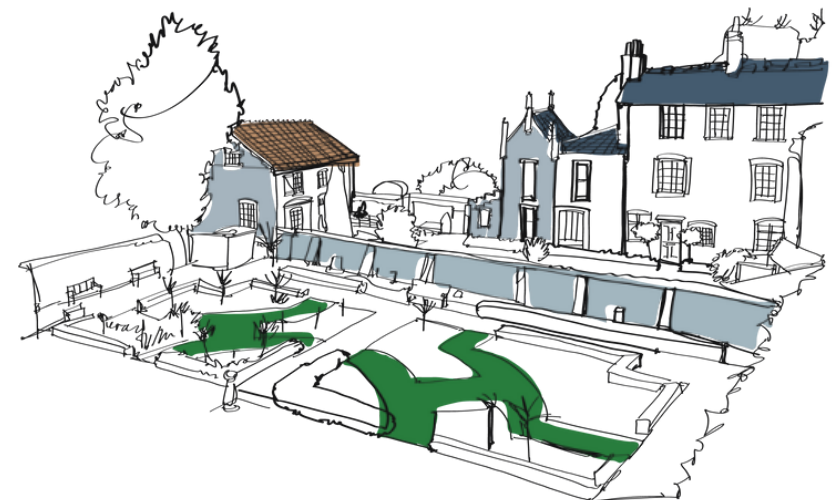
West Suffolk Council (01284 763 233)

Council Tax Band E - £2,436.39 per annum (April 2023 - March 2024)



## LISTED DESIGNATION

The property falls within the Grade II listed curtilage of The West Front due to its unique situation and the historical significance of the immediate locale.





# CLIMATE POSITIVE

We are conscious participants in the built environment, and rooted in the business is our tree planting mission.

For each sale and letting successfully completed, we cover the cost of tree planting by contributing part of our commission to worldwide reforestation projects through our impact partner: Ecologi.

*We're in the  
business of doing  
good business.*

- James Sawyer, Director of Whatley Lane

BUY OR RENT PROPERTY, PLANT TREES

**Trees planted for every  
property sold or let.**





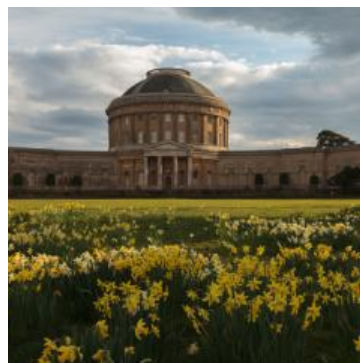
*it's*  
YOUR  
WORLD

WE'RE JUST HERE TO HELP YOU MAKE YOUR MOVE.

From rural cottages to country residences, period townhouses and new homes, our professional sales and lettings teams offer a bespoke, unrivalled service, tailored to suit your needs.







## CONTACT

+44 (0) 1284 765 256

[bury@wlea.co.uk](mailto:bury@wlea.co.uk)

1 Churchgate Street  
Bury St. Edmunds  
Suffolk  
IP33 1RL





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