



# PLAS WENALLT

Llanafan | Aberystwyth | Wales | SY23 4AX

FINE & COUNTRY



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This Grade II listed former vicarage is believed to have Georgian origins and later Victorian editions. The property occupies an elevated position just north of the Trawsgoed Estate in Crossword Ceredigion. The property with ties to the Crossword Estate, offers very spacious and characterful accommodation including three good sized reception rooms, large kitchen / breakfast room with pantry, original house kitchen, four good size first floor bedrooms with two bathrooms, plus a useful and potentially self contained one bedroom apartment within the main house too. In need of some cosmetic updating Plas Wenallt offers an exceptional opportunity to live in a historic and beautiful home just 20 minutes from Aberystwyth.

Outside the grounds offer a variety of flora and fauna including a large wooded area, vegetable beds, lawn areas, secret garden areas and excellent parking with a single garage (in need of repair). Within the grounds there are the original coach houses in need of refurbishment, which could subject to the necessary planning permissions, be refurbished to provide extra accommodation or rooms in the future.

Properties such as Plas Wenallt come to the market very rarely and an early inspection is recommended to avoid disappointment.

## Vendor Interview:

I first saw Plas Wenallt when it was still a vicarage. I was here on some school related business and as I stood in the gateway the vicar came through the arch on the left in her ecclesiastical robes. I stood transfixed - gazing at the house. I had lived in the village for over five years and had no idea it was there. The vicar told me this was a very common reaction 'We're well hidden, aren't we?' she said. To me it was my dream house; a perfect little Georgian gem nestled in the middle of the Ystwyth Valley within walking distance of the village I had come to love so much and where our children were happily settled in school.

I next saw the house at a New Year's party in the village. The lady of the house was a keen embroiderer. On the wall were cross stitch pictures of various grand houses in the area - Nanteos, Llidiardau, Trawsgoed and .... the vicarage. Most of us recognised the first three but were stumped by the last. I immediately jumped in saying I knew it. It was the vicarage! 'Yes', she said 'It's coming on the market'

The world collapsed around me then and there. I had no need of a house. I already had a perfectly adequate one in the village. But I knew I had to have it. There was no going back.

To cut a long story short (wheels grind slowly with the church), we finally bought it two years







That was 28 years ago, and we've lived here very happily ever since.

I had been right. It was the perfect house. A Goldilocks's house. Nothing is too big or small. Nothing too showy or mean.

It is of course at its best when filled with people - and they do love to come to stay. But I wouldn't say we rattle around when we're on our own.

I can't imagine Christmas anywhere else. One of the loveliest things is coming back from the garden at Christmas time and seeing the tree lights reflected in the pond. Snow lifts it right on to another plane of course.

In the summer, sitting at the garden table in the evening sun watching the antics of the jackdaws (who nest in the ancient black poplar across the road) is a real delight. They fly off around the valley in a great flock, then settle back on to the branches in pairs. They mate for life apparently. From there you can also view the main part of the garden through a 'window' in the old box hedge. Another lovely thing about that particular spot is that sometimes in the summer you can hear the distant voices of children playing on the riverbank across the road. It's a nice little shingle beach just 5 minutes walk from the house, but the river isn't deep enough for swimming there. For that you need to walk another five minutes along the road - which takes you to the swing bridge. There the Ystwyth has some little pools deep enough for proper swimming.

Historically the house was originally built in the 18th century as part of the Trawsgoed Estate and was used as the residence of the Estate Manager. It was here that the tenants came to pay their quarterly rent. Not just cash either. The Crosswood Deeds and Documents (of which we keep a copy in the old office) lists such various goods as '4 hens and 20 eggs at Shrovetide, 12 geese at Christmas and a suit at the new mill at Ystwyth'. The office was clearly a busy place!

The house underwent major refurbishment and extension in the 19th century. We have an old photograph of Mr Gardener the land agent - a famous 'character' apparently, standing at the rear of the house, in what experts tell me looks like the 1880's. The well-established climbing rose on the wall behind would suggest that the Victorian extension was completed many years before. The porch where the tenants used to wait (after what was often a very long walk) is still there and has a very special feel to it.

When I asked my husband to write a short piece about the house he predictably (as a forester) wrote only about the trees. And they are very interesting - at least those that are left. A woman who lived here in the 1940's told me that there had been 3 acres of garden surrounding the house including extensive fruit orchards and a walnut grove. You can see the flat place at the top of the garden where the tennis courts once stood. It is now part of a neighbouring field, but the enormous holm oak which must have stood on the edge is still there and is majestic. Nearby, and still part of the property, is a massive cooking apple tree which I think could easily predate the original Bramley tree of 1809. I also think it has more flavour - but perhaps I'm biased.

Although the last two original walnuts stand at the end of the neighbouring farmer's field (past the rubble that marks the spot where the old summerhouse stood), over the years we have grown numerous 'Wenallt walnuts', and one is growing onto a magnificent specimen near the greenhouse. Many more are in neighbourhood gardens and are scattered across Wales in woods and forests my husband has planted.

There are more clues to the history of the house in the garden. Three surviving Scots pines that used to form an entire line along the bottom of the bank marked the way for the drovers heading off across the mountain road towards the English cities. The majestic North American cypress on the front lawn is a specimen from the extensive collection growing in the grounds of the Trawsgoed mansion.

The ford in the river close by links the road outside the house (B4340) with the Sarn Helen (the old Roman road) and some think that the first buildings at Wenallt may have been a guard post looking over this important river crossing.



















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