



Scythe House
Green Lane | Pangbourne | Reading | Berkshire | RG8 7BG

 FINE & COUNTRY

SCYTHE HOUSE



*“Every moment here is a pleasure.
It’s just a beautiful space.”*



The highly regarded architect, Thomas Rayson, has been described as “The last of Oxford’s Arts and Crafts-inspired architects”. Rayson was commissioned to work on significant college buildings, memorials that include the Oxford War Memorial in St Giles’, and private homes for clients that include John Henry Brookes – the founder of Oxford Brookes University. He also served as the Chairman of the Oxford Art Society.

KEY FEATURES

Description Summary

A beautiful, unlisted, 1920s Arts & Crafts family home in an incredibly private location. Set in 1.25 acres of low-maintenance gardens, with 5 bedrooms, 6 baths, a hard tennis court and an indoor swimming pool complex, a 10-min walk from Pangbourne and the fast trains to London.

Location

Scythe House is wonderfully hidden from view, sitting in over an acre of gardens surrounded by tall trees, set back and concealed from the road.

The brick pillars and iron gates that mark the entrance to Scythe House can be found a short distance along Green Lane, which in turn is a short 10-minute walk from the thriving village of Pangbourne, with its selection of independent shops, pubs, restaurants and fast train line into London Paddington.

Pangbourne sits on the River Thames and was once the home and inspiration for Kenneth Grahame's enduring classic, *The Wind in the Willows*. It has also proven a creative source for Jimmy Page during the time Led Zeppelin were forming, and D.H. Lawrence.

The main road arteries of the M4 and A34 are a short drive away – connecting you with London and the south coast, among pretty much all other destinations.

Property

Scythe House is an exceptional family home, built in the 1920s in the late Arts and Crafts manner, that brims with original character and charm.

Today it's surrounded by beautifully planted gardens of 1.25 acres, with a hard tennis court and a heated indoor swimming pool, all of which are screened by high, mature hedges and trees. The house enjoys a southerly aspect with views across to the Sulham Hills.

A near-perfect and original example of late Arts and Crafts design, Scythe House was designed by the respected architect Thomas Rayson. Constructed in 1926 it's a beautiful example of a simpler, more organic aesthetic combined with modern building innovations. The house stays wonderfully cool in summer and warm in winter.

From Green Lane, elegant iron gates lead you down a long curving drive, approximately 100 meters long – the house isn't visible from the road. It's worth noting this is one of the few remaining large plots in this highly sought-after area.

On arrival at the house, the driveway opens to provide ample parking for numerous cars, in addition to the parking provided by the two double garages.

The barley-twist brick pillars of the porch welcome you, in true Arts and Crafts style, to this exceptional home. Inside, you have 5 bedrooms, 6 bathrooms and swimming pool complex with bathroom and gym space, a spacious kitchen/breakfast room, a butler's pantry.

Entrance hall

From the wide oak front door with its fanlight above, you enter the vestibule, then what may be better described as an entrance reception area rather than an entrance hall.

The space, light and original features – such as the metal letterbox in the porch, the quarry tiles in the vestibule, the brick fireplace and oak staircase in the entrance hall, and the original Japanese oak matchstick flooring that runs through much of the house – set the tone for this wonderfully original period home.

A lovely detail you'll notice throughout Scythe House is the rounded 'bullnose' corners between the walls and ceiling and the window and door recesses. This is to create the organic, natural look so important to the Arts and Crafts movement, and which speaks to the care and skill of the builder.

Drawing room

This wonderfully unspoilt room retains its wide brick fireplace, now fitted with a wood-burning stove, complete with mantel, nooks and recessed oak cupboard doors that hide storage space for logs and kindling.

The elegant proportions make this a convivial, entertaining and relaxing space filled with natural light. You've plenty of room for matching chesterfields, armchairs and accompanying furniture and feature plants.

Oak tri-fold doors into the entrance hall allow the room to be closed off for a more intimate ambience. A doorway into the adjoining garden room offers views out across the terrace to the enclosed gardens beyond.

Garden room

The barley twist brick pillars remind you that this was once an external sun room, matching the porch at the front of the house. Today this space is enclosed, with the oak panelling, contrasting black French doors and windows, and the sandstone floor giving this charming room a wonderfully nostalgic 1920s feel.

You've plenty of space for a selection of seating from which to enjoy the views across the gardens.

Dining room

The beautifully proportioned, somewhat elongated octagonal dining room comfortably accommodates a table for eight or more. The wide bay has south-facing views across the patio to the garden beyond. On the opposite side, the two corners are bevelled, creating the octagonal effect, with a feature brick fireplace replacing one corner and a serving shelf the other. The adjoining wall has the original serving hatch that connects with the butler's pantry beyond.

Snug / Study

Off the dining room, this charming dual-aspect room has an attractive feature brick fireplace opposite French doors that open onto the patio, and a side window that looks out towards the tennis court above.

This pretty room, with its fitted bookcase and built-in cupboard, has many possible uses: as a snug, TV room, home office or music room.

Butler's pantry

From the hallway you pass through the butler's pantry on your way to the kitchen/breakfast room. This retains its gorgeous honey-coloured oak cabinetry with glazed cupboards above. A butler's sink looks out to the front of the house, to ensure you always know who's arriving, and there's the all-important serving hatch discreetly built into the wall of cupboards, through which to attend to those in the dining room next door.









SELLER INSIGHT

“

It's extremely private, which is one of the things we love about it."

"In just a 10-minute walk from the house you reach the river, passing the house where Kenneth Grahame wrote Wind in the Willows. Of course Ratty and Mole and so on were based around Pangbourne, so you pass Toad House."

"When we were looking for a place to buy, we wanted to be somewhere that had access to the countryside and easy connections to London. Pangbourne has two direct trains an hour straight into London Paddington, so it's incredibly well connected."

"It's a little piece of history, and we love it."

"It's a beautiful place to be on so many levels."

"It's a beautiful area. Scythe House is set back from Green Lane. In fact, you can't see it from Green Lane. It has beautiful character, wonderful style, history and some quirks that just draw the attention."

"It has the space that we wanted to function without ever feeling it went on forever and we weren't going to be able to manage it properly. It has lovely outside space in terms of the gardens, nature and greenery. It really has that perfect combination of indoor and outdoor living."

"Scythe House isn't the original name. We believe the inspiration for the name comes from the drive. When you arrive at the beautiful cast iron gates at the end of the drive, you don't actually see the house. What you see is a lovely driveway sweeping up ahead of you, and then curving round slightly. I understand that it was this shape of the long driveway, where the house is concealed from view, that gave the house its name."

"The hall is a nice open sociable area in the middle of the house. It has views onto the southern lawn, with the triple doors allowing a flow through into the lounge. So you have lots of space socially."

"When it comes to entertaining, people can walk through and enjoy slightly different views from different parts of the house without feeling that they have to stay in one room."

"It has that Arts and Crafts mixture of both beautiful design and total practical function that is so special."

"It's a beautiful house. The way it's been designed. You feel you're in a piece of history, but in a piece of very well designed, highly functional history."

"In winter, one of us will light the log burner fire and sit there feeling cosy in the living room. It's a wonderful place to sit."

"The ceilings are reasonably high throughout the house. Nothing crazy high, it's very much in proportion and spacious. So it keeps the warmth in winter. But at the same time, you always feel that it's open."

"I love the sun room first thing in the morning. You get the sun coming up in the east and can look out onto the lawn and see the birds, and occasionally the squirrels going for their morning perambulations. It's just a lovely place to be."

"The views out onto the south-facing garden from the sun room are something that I will miss. That and the beautiful views looking out east. I think it's in such a wonderful situation in that regard."

"The house has echoes of what was probably the end of the service era, when you had butlers and maids. There's the second staircase that goes off the kitchen, for example, which the staff would have used."

"I love to sit in the kitchen with a morning coffee and watch the sun coming up in I often open the back door, and the sunlight just streams in. There's a beautiful archway over the back door that lets in lots of light."

"The slate shelves in the pantry, we think they're original, are quite musical. If you sort of bang them, they all play different notes."

* These comments are the personal views of the current owner and are included as an insight into life at the property. They have not been independently verified, should not be relied on without verification and do not necessarily reflect the views of the agent.

"The house was built in a time when you didn't really have refrigeration. So you kept your food in the coolest part of the house; hence the pantry and larder is on the north side with cool shelving. In terms of a functional building, the house works extremely well."

"From the kitchen area, next to the side door, is a lovely little hatchway that I believe was used for milk deliveries, being on the north side of the house. It's just charming."

"For pool parties, there's easy access from the pool to the patio outside, which has an additional piece of lawn that stretches further away."

"One thing that's lovely about the house is the doors that open on the south side and the beautifully secluded large lawn. It's ideal for the smaller children to play out there before bedtime strikes, meanwhile, the teenagers can disappear to the tennis court or sit in front of the pool, and they feel they've got their own space. They're not under anyone's feet and they can be summoned when food's ready."

"The garden is beautiful. It's a year-round garden."

"We've a mix of trees, some coniferous, some that give us some nice autumn colour. We've got a couple of cherry trees too, as well as an apple and walnut tree."

"While it's a south-facing garden, there are plenty of trees, so you can always choose to sit in a sunny area or a shady area. There's never a need, I would say, anywhere in the day, to feel 'Oh, hang on! This is getting oppressive'."

"Come the evening, there's a bench outside in the garden that looks northwest that's a lovely place to sit."

"We've got a table and chairs set out along the south of the building, and the evening light there is lovely. It's not necessarily all direct all the time, it sort of flits in and out of the trees as it sets. It's something to enjoy."

"We've got a little hut which we've not really had the chance to do anything to. It's almost like a little tennis court hut. I think it could be a wonderful playhouse or a little artist's studio, something like that. It's absolutely beautiful, and it has to be original."

"I love being able to set out in the morning. You have a little eight-minute walk into town to the bakery, pick up some croissants and a newspaper, and be back for breakfast. I think that it's the perfect balance between a beautiful country life and being able to walk to all the shops that you might want, while also being able to travel easily and quickly into London."

"For me, Pangbourne is the perfect sweet spot with easy access on foot to walks in the countryside, and yet also 10 minutes to the station on foot to the twice-hourly direct train to London."

"The village itself is very much a village, and yet it has a speciality cheese shop, several small but lovely restaurants, a wonderful health food shop, a convenience that doubles as a post office and sells everything you ever needed but didn't know about it to do with the house and garden. And a butcher's! It's a village with a heart."

"The community here is wonderful. We established links very quickly. We've got groups that I go out with, go to lunch and everything like that. There are some lovely people around."

"We'd like to think that if the original architect, Thomas Rayson, looked at our plans now, he would say, 'Oh, you're just considering adding one archway here. That is a good idea.' We wanted to be totally true to the spirit of the house. It's a beautiful place to be on so many levels."

"It's a lovely warm house in winter. We were looking ahead at the ecological side of things, and we basically made sure everything is absolutely fine."



Kitchen/breakfast room

An arched doorway takes you from the butler's pantry into the kitchen/breakfast room beyond. The country cottage styling provides ample space and a wealth of storage and work surfaces.

The 'working' part of the kitchen is arranged in a horseshoe configuration, making it a highly efficient yet sociable space, with the breakfast table beyond.

Within the kitchen you have a single oven with a four-burner gas hob above, and a separate Canche range with a triple oven and five-ring induction hob set into the old chimney breast – both of which sit beneath extractor hoods. A 1½ bowl ceramic sink looks out toward the front of the house.

Next to the kitchen is the breakfast area, with ample space for a table for six or more. From here you have views out to the side garden.

A staircase, once primarily used by the house's domestic staff, leads upstairs to the bedrooms, coming out beside the 'bridge' that connects to the swimming pool complex.

From the kitchen/breakfast room there is a short corridor with a series of rooms that include the larder with its cooling solid slate shelves, wine storage is downstairs: store room is a separate room next to larder with a window and more ample storage space.

Near the side door onto the drive, you can see an old hatch probably once used for milk deliveries.

WC

A well-appointed WC is located just off the entrance hallway, down a couple of steps, with an additional 'gardener's' loo next to the laundry room.



KEY FEATURES

UPSTAIRS

The oak staircase takes you up to five bedrooms, four of which are ensuite, with a separate shower room serving the fifth bedroom. There is also a changing shower room for the indoor pool.

In addition, you've an extra WC, a store cupboard/airing cupboard and several other storage cupboards along the upstairs corridor.

Principal ensuite bedroom

The lovely wide, deep bay window is the natural focal point for this spacious king-sized bedroom. Recessed lighting, a picture rail, wood flooring and skirting boards enhance this room's already calm, serene feel. With a built-in wardrobe/cupboard.

The fully tiled ensuite is well-equipped, with a P-shaped bath with shower over, a low-level loo, bidet and hand basin with vanity unit. A tall, chromed ladder-style towel rail dries and warms towels, while the window onto the private garden fills the room with natural light.

Ensuite bedroom two

A spacious king-sized room with easterly and southerly facing windows that capture the morning sun. You've plenty of space for as much or as little bedroom furniture as you like, with additional storage tucked away in the window eaves.

The ensuite shower room is half-tiled, with a fully tiled shower enclosure, a close-coupled WC, hand basin and white ladder-style towel rail.

Ensuite bedroom three

A generous double bedroom with views across the valley to the Sulham hills. The spacious ensuite is fitted with a full-length bath with a bath and shower mixer tap, a close-coupled loo, bidet and pedestal hand basin.

Ensuite bedroom four

A particularly charming bedroom with a balcony looking out over the garden and a side window giving views across to the tennis court. Of note in this room is the original 'borrowed light' window above the door, and the arched double doors into the ensuite bathroom.

The large ensuite contains a full-length bath with a bath and shower mixer tap, a close-coupled loo, bidet, pedestal basin and chromed heated towel rail. Half-height tiles encircle the room. A door leads into a built-in wardrobe.

Bedroom five

The smallest bedroom is still a good-sized double, currently fitted with an L-shaped desk offering plenty of surface, has extensive under-eaves storage (with shelves and interior lighting) – ideal for a younger member of the family or as a home office/guest bedroom and views out over the tennis court.

Family shower room

Fully tiled, with a quadrant corner shower with thermostatically controlled shower with both a fixed and a handheld shower head, a close-coupled loo, a hand basin on a vanity unit, a ladder-style heated towel radiator and an illuminated mirrored cabinet.

WC

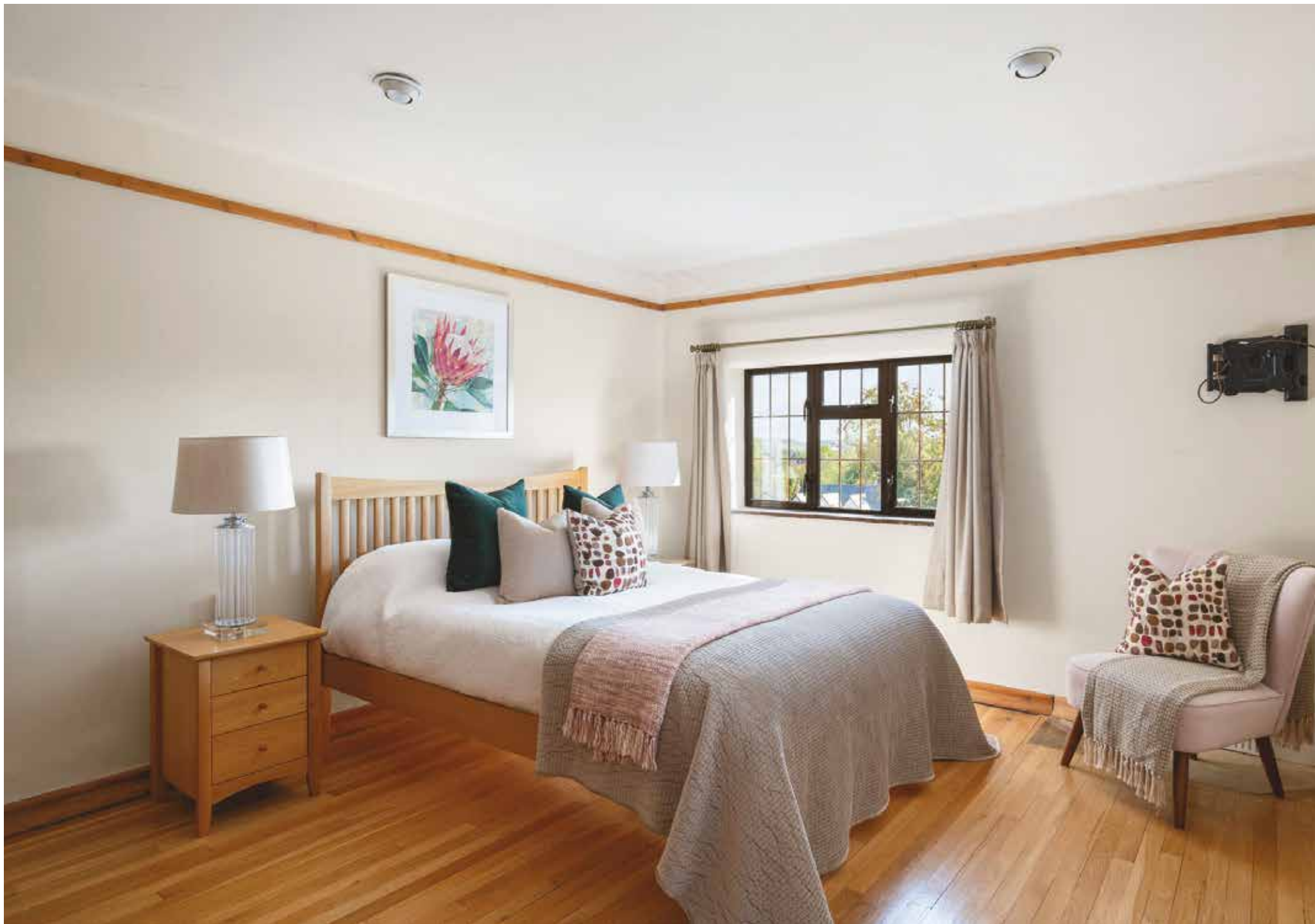
With a close-coupled loo and an opening window.

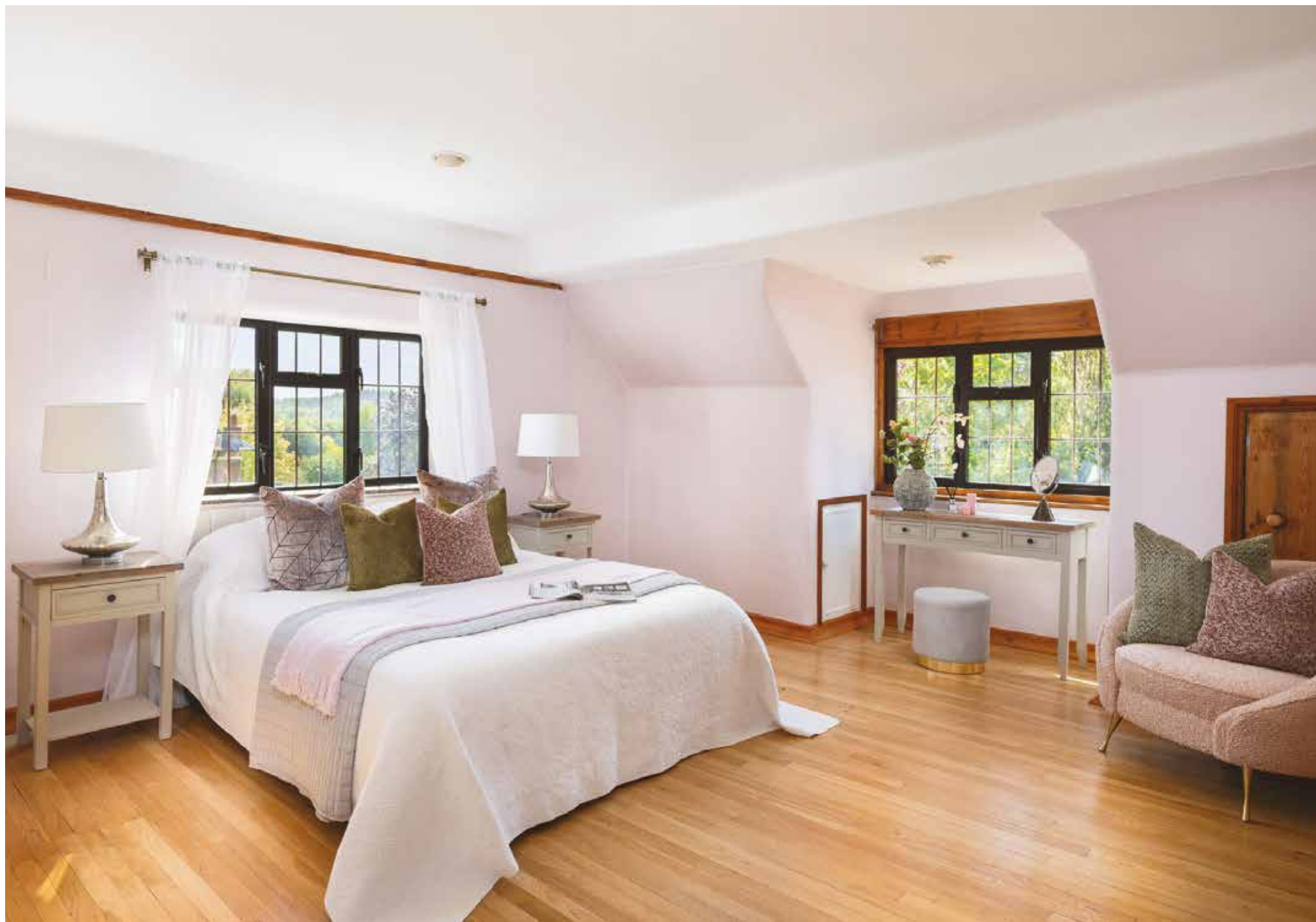
Upstairs hallway

The long hallway is peppered with built-in storage cupboards and an airing cupboard.









Pool complex

From the upstairs landing, the indoor pool complex can be accessed via the high-level sitting area, which currently serves as a home gym. Storage is tucked into the eaves on both sides. Next door to the raised pool sitting area is a useful changing and shower room, with a separate WC.

A spa pool sits just beyond the gated doorway, beside stairs leading down to the pool.

The heated swimming pool is approximately 30 x 15 feet (roughly 4.5 x 9 meters) and, being usable all year round, is perfect for a daily invigorating early morning swim or a relaxing after-work wind down, as well as social pool parties.

Around the pool, you have plenty of space for loungers and potted plants. Large windows keep this space light and bright, while curtains ensure privacy. There's a dehumidifier and the central heating is new.



OUTSIDE

Scythe House sits in exceptional gardens that extend to 1.25 acres and wrap around the house, ensuring incredible levels of privacy and distance from the nearest road or neighbour. The boundary is edged by tall mature trees and hedges.

Within the garden, the planting has been designed with numerous herbaceous borders and shrubs to give ongoing colour and interest, with minimal maintenance.

York stone patios line the south-facing side of the house, perfect for outside dining and lounging, while paths and steps lead up to the tennis court area. The patio can be reached from the garden room, entrance hall and snug.

Tennis court

The tennis court has been well maintained and is ready for you next rally. Mature trees edge the hard tennis court, and there's a charming original hut nearby.

Parking

The house is approached via a long curving drive that extends roughly 100 meters up to the property.

Parking is plentiful, with two double-garage blocks, each with electric up-and-over doors. One garage block is linked to the house via a 'bridge' and includes a garden store and pool pump room to the rear. The other is a newer oak-framed building, used by the current owners on a daily basis. In addition, the large forecourt provides parking space for six to eight cars.

In the area

Pangourne village is just a short, 8-10 minute stroll away. The village is thriving, and has numerous independent shops, cafes, restaurants and pubs.

Good to know

This is generally a house that invites long-term ownership. Since it was built, almost exactly 100 years ago, it's had two significantly long-term owners – each over 40 years. This house rarely comes on the market.

Planning permission

The current owners have plans drawn up and approved for some minor alterations, which the new owners may want to consider implementing. These are available on request.

Transport links

By car

The M4 is a few minutes' drive away, with the A34 a little further. Together, these mean you can access London in the east, Bristol and Cornwall in the west, and heading northwards to Birmingham or south to the coast.

By train

Pangbourne station is just a 10-minute walk away. From here, direct trains run into Reading and London Paddington – which takes on average 30 minutes with roughly two trains an hour during peak hours. To the west, trains run to Didcot Parkway and Oxford, with their onward connections.

Schooling

According to West Berkshire Council, the schools within the catchment area are:

Primary: St Pauls Catholic Primary School and Pangbourne Primary

Secondary: Theale Green School

In addition, there's a wide range of highly acclaimed private schools in the area, which include Pangbourne College, St Andrew's, Bradfield College, Cranford School, Moulsoford Pre-prep and Prep, Abingdon Prep and Abingdon School.







INFORMATION

Services, Utilities & Property Information

Local Authority: West Berkshire Council

Tenure: Freehold | EPC: E | Council Tax Band: H

Construction Type: Brick/Tiles

Electricity supply: Mains

Water supply: Mains

Drainage & Sewerage: Mains

Heating: Gas

Broadband: FTTC Superfast Broadband connection available, we advise you to check with your provider.

Mobile Coverage: Mobile Coverage: EE 5G available, we advise you to check with your provider.

Garage Parking: 2 Double Garages

Parking Spaces: Large Drive at least 6 cars

Total Internal Floor Area: 5,279sqft

Flood Risk:

Flood Zone 2 is identified approximately 24 metres from the property, with areas of surface water flood risk also identified nearby. Purchasers should make their own enquiries regarding flood risk and insurance.

Directions

What3Words <https://what3words.com> Postcode: RG8 7BG - ///business.streetcar.item

Viewing Arrangements

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Website

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We value the little things that make a home

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