



Moss Fen Lodge  
Church Road | Sea Palling | Norfolk | NR12 0UB

 FINE & COUNTRY

# A TALE TO TELL



“All is not what it seems at this character home, a beautiful chocolate box cottage, tucked away down a quiet lane in the seaside village of Sea Palling, close to open countryside and the historic parish church.

The house looks as though it dates back hundreds of years, yet it’s actually around 45 years old, with an extension added in 1989.

Exquisitely finished with reclaimed materials, you have the authentic feel of a character property with the ease of a modern home.

All just a short walk from the beach.”



# KEY FEATURES

- A Pretty Detached Cottage situated in the Coastal Village of Sea Palling
- Originally Designed and Built in 1979 by the Current Owner
- Three Bedrooms and Two Bath/Showers
- Three Reception Rooms and a Ground Floor WC
- Kitchen with Larder
- Flexible Living Accommodation with a Separately Accessed Wing used for AirBnb
- Enclosed Garden and Large Outbuilding/Workshop
- The Accommodation extends to 1,127sq.ft
- Energy Rating: E

Pretty as a picture, this cottage has enormous appeal from first glance. The frontage is beautiful, and the interior more than lives up to it with bags of character throughout. The house has never before come to the market, having been in the same family right from the start. The current owners grew up here and have very happy memories of their childhood, with the property a short walk from the beach. Perfect for a couple or family, this is a true one off and a rare opportunity.

## Beautifully Bespoke

The original part of the property was built in 1979 by an experienced architect looking to put his knowledge to good use to create a home for his family. It has a modern construction hidden behind reclaimed materials. The roof came from an old barn, the pavement tiles on the floor are reclaimed, as is much of the timber used throughout. There's a coffin trap on the first floor, a cold shelf in the larder and Victorian-style WCs. So authentic was the finish that the house was Grade II listed by Historic England sometime in the 80's! The owners had the listing lifted so they could build an extension to the property in 1989 to provide additional accommodation for their daughters. Certainly the cottage feels incredibly authentic, even when you know it's a modern property.

## Family Friendly And Flexible

Ask the owners which part of the property they love the most and they'll tell you it's the sitting room. Here with the reclaimed oak beams, you're transported back to another age and it's refreshingly cool in summer and cosy in winter. The kitchen has a wonderful walk-in larder and sits next to a formal dining room where the current owners remember their parents hosting many a dinner party.





# KEY FEATURES

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Also on the ground floor, you'll find the 1989 extension, consisting of a bedroom, living area and shower room. This was built for the girls when they were growing up, to give them a shared bedroom and their own playroom. Their mother downsized here using it as a separate bedroom and sitting room and in more recent years it's been a very successful AirBnB, with walkers and birdwatchers using it as a base for their visits to the area. You can choose to have this open to the main house or to keep it entirely separate, so it's very versatile. Back in the main part of the cottage, there are two bedrooms and a first-floor bathroom. Outside there's an outbuilding that's useful both for storage and as a workshop.

## Coast And Community

The cottage sits comfortably in its gardens on a quiet lane by the village church. It is a no through road, with only the occasional passing car and entirely out of the way of the holidaymakers who head to the other end of the village for the beach and the tourist amenities. From here, you can walk through the churchyard (you can hear the bells peal when you're at home) and over the fields to get to the golden sands of Sea Palling. Whilst the village and beach does get busy in peak season at the main beach entrance on Beach Road, head a few minutes in either direction and you'll have the beach to yourself. Sea Palling has a dog friendly stretch of beach and there's a safe swimming area with lifeguards during the summer months. The village has a year-round community, with an active village hall and parish council and a useful shop and Post Office. There's a pub, fish and chip shop, amusements, ice creams and all the usual seaside amenities, so it has a lovely holiday feel. When you need to head to the supermarket, you're only a short drive from the market town of Stalham, and there's alternatives nearby in North Walsham which has a Waitrose and Lidl. You're also within easy reach of the vibrant and historic city of Norwich, with a thriving arts scene, great dining and superb shopping.

























# INFORMATION

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## On The Doorstep

The nearby village of Ingham boasts the thatched 16th Century Ingham Swan Inn and being in the centre of the Norfolk Broads there are fine countryside views as well as it being an excellent location for walking, sailing and wildlife. Stalham has a good range of shops and amenities, including a Tesco supermarket and secondary schools, whilst Wroxham, the acknowledged centre of the Broads network, also offers a wide range of amenities. The village of Hickling boasts the largest of all the Norfolk Broads and is also the home of the Norfolk Wildlife Trust nature reserve.

## How Far Is It To?

The city of Norwich is approximately 16 miles away and has excellent educational, cultural and recreational facilities. There is a regular rail service to London Liverpool Street and Norwich airport provides daily flights internally and to continental Europe. The North Norfolk Coast can be found further around the coastline to the north with its quaint villages and sandy beaches. Favoured spots include Holt, Wells on Sea, Blakeney and the Burnhams. A 45 minute drive south will see you arrive at Thetford Forest with its many nature trails and bicycle paths whilst Stansted Airport is a further hour drive with its many destinations offered throughout mainland Europe.

## Directions

Proceed out of Norwich on the A1151 Wroxham Road, passing through the village of Wroxham. Upon entering Stalham, turn left signposted Ingham and Sea Palling just after the Tesco supermarket. Upon reaching The Ingham Swan, continue around a series of tight bends, continuing along Sea Palling Road heading towards the coast and continue onto Stalham Road. Then take a slight right onto Church Road.

## Services, District Council and Tenure

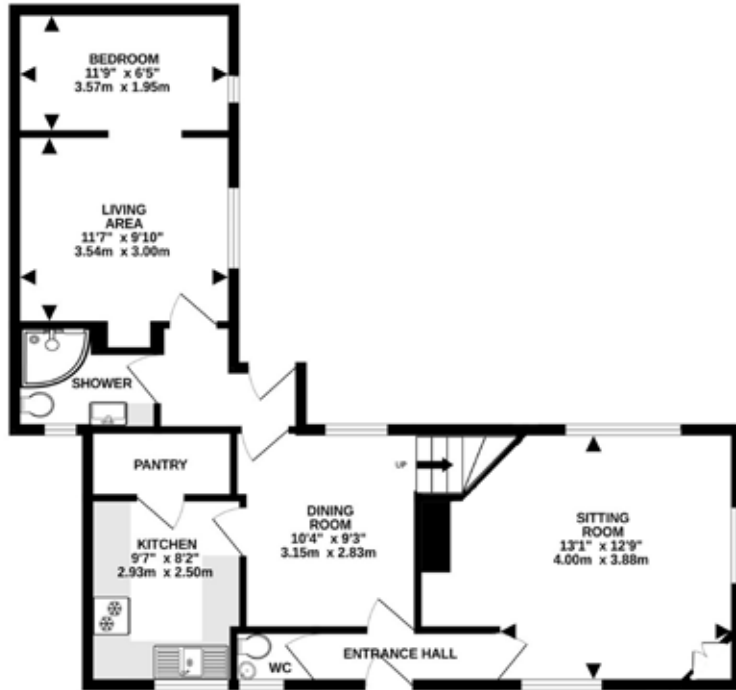
Oil Central Heating, Electric Heating in the Annexe, Mains Water and Drainage  
Broadband Available - Vendor uses Vodafone  
Mobile Phone Reception - varies depending on network provider  
Please see [www.checker.ofcom.org.uk](http://www.checker.ofcom.org.uk) - for Broadband/Mobile availability  
North Norfolk District Council - Council Tax Band D  
Freehold

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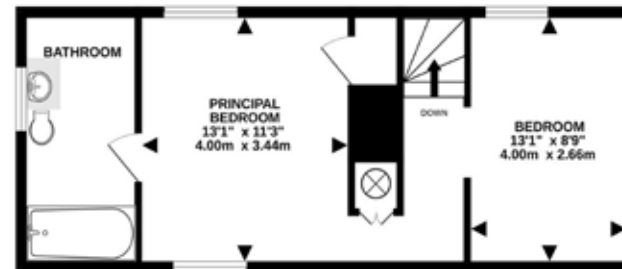
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GROUND FLOOR  
711 sq.ft. (66.0 sq.m.) approx.



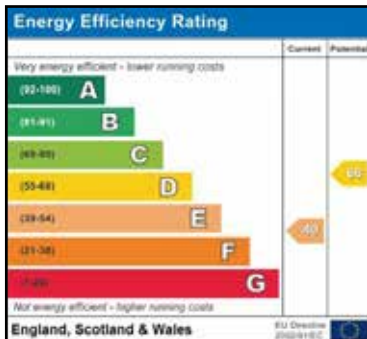
1ST FLOOR  
417 sq.ft. (38.7 sq.m.) approx.



OUTBUILDING  
640 sq.ft. (59.4 sq.m.) approx.

FLOOR AREA - HOUSE (EXCLUDING WORKSHOP) : 1127 sq.ft. (104.8 sq.m.) approx.  
TOTAL FLOOR AREA : 1767 sq.ft. (164.2 sq.m.) approx.

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For a free valuation, contact the numbers listed on the brochure.



# THE TIME

MONDAY APRIL 11 1988

## This desirable 16th century house, circa 1983

By Robin Young

The house that Mr John Royal built has been listed as a 16th-century building of special architectural and historic interest — even though he completed it only five years ago.

Mr Royal is pleased with the Department of the Environment's unsuspecting tribute to the accuracy with which he reproduced the style of the medieval home he most admired. But he felt obliged to confess that Moss Fen Lodge, at Sea Palling in Norfolk, is not an exceptionally well-preserved 16th-century house at all.

The roof came from a barn, hieels and doors were obtained from demolition sites, and the beams over two inglenook fireplaces were retrieved from a scrapyard.

The bulging walls and thick beams were his own design, as was the nine-inch slope across the floor of one of the bedrooms.



Mr Royal and the house he built with materials salvaged from scrapyards.

"You could not have a house of this sort of period style without settlement," Mr Royal said, "so we built the settlement in as we went along."

Mr Royal and his wife, Simone, lived in a caravan for four years while

they built the house in their spare time. Mr Royal said: "We did not build it as a fake. We built it because it is the style of house we wanted to live in, and we could not afford a real one."

The Department of the Environment inspector who put the house on the list of protected buildings has told the Royals that he still feels the place deserves its Grade II listing, on grounds of rarity and eccentricity, not antiquity. A department spokesman admitted yesterday that a mistake had been made.

The Royals have not yet heard officially whether their confession will mean that the building will be removed from the list, but Mr Royal said: "Frankly it is worth nothing to me, except in humour. I do not need any historic building grants because the place is only five years old."

On the other hand, the listing may increase the value of the house, which is for sale with offers in excess of £80,000 invited. Mr Royal is now thinking of looking for something he can do up in the south of France.

## A SIT-DOWN JOB



MOST OF us have had a laugh or two in our youth about the house that Jack built... but have you heard the story of the house that John built.

John Royal and his wife Simone completed work on their dream home at Sea Palling five years ago. They did all they could to recreate the charm of a 16th century cottage.

They have made such a good job that the "men from the ministry" made a mistake and put it down as an historic grade two listed building. Find out more about this tale of the unsuspected in Friday's NORTH NORFOLK NEWS.

### CHANGING ROLE

Also a special report and pictures turn the spotlight on the area's coastguards (pictured above). It is a service with a long tradition, but its role is changing with the times.

Find out how the tide is turning for the coastguards. If it's too early in the year for a trip to the seaside and the thought of a day at the beach sends shivers down your spine, you may be looking out for somewhere to go or something to do to pass the time.

You cannot fail to find something of interest in the bumper leisure time guide, from ballroom dancing to a free look at the gardens of Mannington Hall.

## 'Old' home fools experts



JOHN Royal — the proud owner of Moss Fen Lodge.

EXPERTS have admitted they were fooled by a Norfolk couple's five-year-old "medieval" home.

They granted listed building status to the house — even though John and Simone Royal built it just five years ago.

A Department of the Environment spokesman said: "It's true that we have made this a listed building, but it's obviously an error."

"It's not a 16th century house, but it's a very good copy of one. We shall be making arrangements to de-list it in due course."

The Royal's home is in the North Norfolk seaside village of Sea Palling and was built using old beams and other building materials gleaned from old barns and farmyards throughout the county.

But when the man from the Ministry came to inspect it, he was so impressed with the exact look of the place — complete with bulging walls and sagging floors — he listed it as a building of special historic interest.

North Norfolk District Council's chief planning officer, Mr Brian Murphy, commented: "We were quite pleased that this house was listed, for it is a recognition of the very good job which Mr Royal has done."

He added: "The Department of the Environment shouldn't be too embarrassed. It's a very understandable error."

Said Mr Royal, 41: "When we first heard, we just burst out laughing. This is a style of house which I have always admired."



A BEDROOM under the eaves for Jenny Royal, aged 47.

Daily Mail, Monday, April 11, 1988

## The listed building that's all a mod con

IT may have been the oak beams that impressed the men from the ministry as it could have been the bulging walls and sagging floors.

Then again, the 350-year-old roof and back steps made out of flint and possibly gave the impression that John and Simone Royal's Elizabethan-style home was extra special.

Whatever, planning chiefs became convinced the two-bed, four-bedroom cottage was 400 years old and ought to be preserved as a listed building.

In fact the house, set in a quarter of an acre, was purchased by Mr Royal in 1983 when he was an unemployed architect who had been refused a mortgage and forced to live in a caravan.

### Barn

"The decision to make it a listed building is completely mystifying. Nobody ever knocked on our door and asked us about it. Still, it's nice to be inside the oak panelled house in Sea Palling, Norfolk."

The couple awarded practically every beam and scrapwood in the country to give up the pieces that made their cottage so original.

Now the property is valued at 180,000. Mr Royal says: "I had 100,000. My wife bought the place and cost us 11,000 including the roof."

Last night the Department of the Environment admitted it had been fooled. A spokesman said: "A mistake had been made which will be put right."

The Sunday Telegraph, April 10 1988

## DIY job's Tudor listing

THE five-year-old house which John and Simone Royal built for themselves at Sea Palling on the Norfolk coast has been listed by Government experts as a 16th century building of special architectural and historic interest.

The couple built Moss Fen Lodge with massive timber beams, bulging walls and sagging floors. The roof came from an old barn and beams and doors from 16th and 17th century properties.

The Department of the Environment put the house on a list of protected buildings.

A ministry spokesman admitted: "It's obviously an error. It's not a 16th century house, but it's a very good copy."

# FINE & COUNTRY

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