

INIGO



Avenue House

WELLS, SOMERSET

£1,350,000 FREEHOLD

Built in the early 19th century, this distinguished Grade II-listed, seven-bedroom house occupies a discreet spot in the heart of the picturesque city of Wells, Somerset. Extending over four storeys and a generous 4,947 sq ft of space, the home has been lovingly restored by its current owners. A rich paint palette emphasises the quiet grandeur of its spaces, and a first-floor balcony looks down onto the lush front garden. Tucked at the rear of the house, a landscaped garden has a contemporary pond and borders brimming with colour. Although the city itself has plenty on offer, both Bath and Bristol can be reached in under an hour by car.

Setting the Scene

Originally constructed around 1800, this expressive Georgian home is an important part of Well's architectural fabric. In the 1870s, it was home to esteemed portrait photographer John Webber, who was ostensibly something of an amateur scientist, too; in 1877, the Wells Journal reported a "gas explosion... at Avenue [House]... [during which] he was knocked down and the window frame was blown a considerable distance into the garden."

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In more recent history, the house played host to a popular French restaurant, Le Gauloise, and was later used as the offices for a law firm. The name 'Avenue House' is derived from early maps of the house, which show two lines of trees flanking the lane leading up from the high street. In recognition of this historical note, the current owners have lined the lane with ranks of hydrangeas to form an equally fitting approach to the house.

The Grand Tour

A set of wrought-iron gates creates a discreet entrance to the house, which is accessed via an avenue filled with greenery. Beyond a lush front garden, the house's striking façade is revealed and is washed in a warm yellow. A balcony with beautiful decorative ironwork frames a glass-panelled door, which unfolds onto a light-filled entrance hall with soaring ceilings.



An original wrought-iron and oak staircase ascends to the first-floor landing, where a magnificent arched window with fanlight fills the space with light. An original fireplace with an ornate cast-iron and marble surround occupies a central position in the sitting room, flanked by two curved alcoves. Walls are picked out in midnight blue, and a large sash window with shutters looks out onto the rooftops beyond.

In the kitchen, oak work surfaces sit atop smart cabinetry by John Lewis of Hungerford, with appliances by Fisher & Paykel and Miele. A set of French doors opens onto the balcony - an idyllic perch for breakfasting. To the rear, a prep kitchen is fitted with integrated appliances. There are two additional rooms on this floor; one is currently used as a study, while the other has ample built-in storage. Both would be equally suitable as bedrooms. There is also a bathroom with a bathtub on this floor.

A series of versatile living spaces occupies the ground floor. In the drawing room, walls are washed in a sumptuous red, while two gently arched alcoves frame a fireplace. Elaborate cornicing and mouldings adorn the ceiling, and French doors with painted shutters open onto the garden.

Across the hall, an expansive reception room has been painted in a soft taupe; it also has outdoor access, care of a set of French doors. Fitted storage stretches across one wall in the second reception room, and a window seat sits below a large panelled window with leafy views.

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On this floor, there is also a generous study with fitted glazed cabinets, and a third reception room currently used as a workroom. Here, an arched window suffuses the space with light. The ground-floor plan is completed by a guest WC and a potting shed, which is accessed from outside.

The second floor is occupied by five double bedrooms, each illuminated by large sash windows. The principal bedroom has a generous en suite bathroom with a walk-in shower and a corner bathtub. A shared bathroom has a walk-in shower.

A large cellar sits below the house and has multiple rooms; one is currently used as a gymnasium. There is also a substantial attic.

The Great Outdoors

A spectacular landscaped garden sits at the rear of the house. Embraced by stone walls on two sides and full-height obscure glass panels to the rear, the space is brimming with greenery. Fastigiate yews stand tall in raised beds brimming with shrubs and grasses, while an elongated pond is home to fish and water lilies. A variety of paved, lawned and decked areas framed by jasmine and wisteria are perfect for sitting out or dining, and a delightful potting shed houses an original bread oven from days gone by.

A cedar-framed greenhouse sits to one side of the house. There is also spot and motion-sensor lighting, and access to a handy undercroft with space for bicycle storage.

The front garden is filled with hydrangeas and palms, and has a pretty water feature. Parts of both gardens are connected to an automatic watering system, and the first-floor balcony provides further opportunities for sitting out.

There is parking for up to four cars at the rear of the house.

Out and About

Avenue House is wonderfully located in a discreet spot in the heart of Wells. The city's Grade I-listed Gothic cathedral is just a five-minute walk from the house, and has a regular programme of exhibitions, lectures and lunchtime concerts. The medieval Bishop's Palace, with its beautiful moat and gardens, is also just a few minutes' walk away.

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A wealth of fine bars and restaurants are on the doorstep. Michelin-recommended Root Wells is known for its seasonal, locally sourced fare, while Goodfellows restaurant has an excellent tasting menu. The Sheep & Penguin pub is a cosy spot for a tipple, while Italian-run Café Nostra is a local favourite for authentic coffee.

The Mendip Hills National Landscape offers plenty of opportunities for exploring in nature; Cheddar Gorge is a short drive away, while Chew Valley and its lake is also close by. There are several pretty towns within easy driving distance; Glastonbury, Frome and Bruton are particular highlights.

Wells has plenty of private and state, primary and secondary schooling options. The all-through Wells Cathedral School is especially well-regarded and is one of the UK's five specialist music schools. There are also excellent primary schools St Joseph and St Theresa Catholic School, and Strawberry Park School. Millfield School is just over a 20-minute drive from the house.

London is a little over three hours away by car. Bath and Bristol can both be reached in under an hour, and Bristol Airport is around a 35-minute journey by car. Castle Cary rail station is around a 25-minute drive away, with services to London Paddington in just over an hour and a half.

Council Tax Band: F

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About

Inigo is an estate agency that specialises in selling marvellous historic homes, believing that a beautiful home is a pleasure that never ages. We connect discerning individuals with extraordinary spaces, no matter the price or provenance. Covering urban and rural locations across Britain, our team combines proven experience selling distinctive homes with design and architectural expertise.