

INIGO



Old Hall House

FRAMSDEN, SUFFOLK

£1,000,000 FREEHOLD

Set in the heart of Framsdon, a spirited village within Suffolk's rolling pastoral landscape, is this five-bedroom, Grade II-listed house. A fine example of the area's vernacular style, the house unfolds across three wings: an original 16th-century thatched hall house; a pantiled parlour block, added in the 17th century; and a contemporary extension introduced by the current owners in 2007. A modern colour and material palette has been sensitively added amid hearty period features that include exposed oak frames, brick fireplaces and a winding newel staircase. Mature gardens surround the house and extend over approximately 1.3 acres, encompassing formal planting, a vegetable garden, swathes of wildflowers and an idyllic pond surrounded by irises, dogwood and oxeye daisies.

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Setting the Scene

Much of Framsdan lies within the Helmingham Estate, and the village is surrounded by arable land managed for farming and preserving veteran trees, hedgerows, ponds and ancient meadows rich in plant and wildlife diversity. At the heart of the estate, in Framsdan's neighbouring village, is Grade I-listed Helmingham Hall, a spectacular moated manor house built in 1510. The manor sits within 400 acres of parkland and has several oak trees said to be up to 900 years old. One of these is depicted in 'A Dell in Helmingham Park', an autumnal scene by landscape artist John Constable, who spent time living at the Helmingham Rectory.



The architectural influence of the manor can be seen in local cottages and houses that borrow from its form and palette of materials. One such case, Old Hall House has evolved and expanded throughout the centuries. The original 16th-century hall was partially rebuilt with red brick in the 19th century, including an axial chimney with sawtooth detailing, modelled after the style of Helmingham Hall. Its more recent contemporary appointment has been undertaken with sensitivity, allowing the period integrity of the building centre stage.

The Grand Tour

A gravelled drive flanked by a long hornbeam hedge leads to the house. A smart façade is topped with thatch and pantiles, facing a parterre garden of sculpted box hedges, euphorbia, roses and peonies. Scented clematis and rock roses are planted beside the front door which opens to an entrance hall.

To the right of the hall is a large reception room, with Suffolk pamment tiles underfoot and exposed oak beams overhead. The space is currently arranged as a dining room, with views through Crittall-style windows over the front garden. On one side of the room, a large brick fireplace with a wood burner and an impressive bressumer beam is carved with a series of remarkable apotropaic – specifically Marian – marks. At the far end of the room, a snug and an office adjoin.

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Beyond the dining room, a central hall opens to the kitchen and a utility room. The kitchen is housed in an extension added by the current owners in 2007, with French doors and casement windows on three sides that provide a strong connection with the garden. Cabinets, made by Ashford and Brooks, are finished in 'Bone' by Farrow and Ball and a black granite countertop. There is also an electric/oil-fired Aga, a butler's sink and a central island topped with a block of beech for chopping. Pamment tiles again pave underfoot, while walls are washed in 'French Gray'. An area in front of glazed doors to the garden patio is perfect for placing an informal breakfast table.

The living room is at the front of the plan, across the central hallway from the kitchen, with sisal carpet and grey-painted infill walls between original oak posts. There is another large fireplace with a wood burner here, making it an ideal space for hunkering down during the colder months. There is also a utility room on the ground floor, accessed from the hallway, the dining room or from the garden. It has an adjoining shower room/WC.

The house has three staircases: two are original and extend to the front of the first-floor plan, including a newel staircase from the entrance hall, while the third is modern and oak-built.

Four double bedrooms lie on the first floor. The primary bedroom is to the rear of the plan, set beneath a steep pitch that provides a wonderful sense of volume and with triple-aspect windows that draw in plenty of light. The room is part of the more recent extension, but its character chimes with the older sections of the house as exposed beams span overhead. The space is complete with built-in wardrobes, engineered oak floorboards, a botanical wallpaper from Graham & Brown and powder-blue walls.

On the other side of the plan, there are three further bedrooms with knotted elm floorboards and pretty views over the box and hornbeam plants in the front garden. One of these rooms is accessed via its own staircase, making it an excellent and private retreat for guests. The shared bathroom is finished with neat white tiles and has a bathtub with a rain-style shower.

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The newel staircase winds to the second floor, where there is a further double bedroom. It has Crittall-style windows that take in views of the rolling fields beyond the garden.

The Great Outdoors

The house is surrounded by a garden that spans around 1.3 acres. The front section is carefully maintained with sculpted box hedging, peonies, hellebores and roses, while the rear gardens take on a wilder character: swathes of oxeye daisies, cow slips and primroses, buttercups and pyramidal orchids bloom between lawns studded with walnut, Himalayan birch and weeping ash trees.

At the top of the garden, a garden studio clad in spruce is positioned to take in views of the wildflower meadow, the house and the countryside beyond.

There is an inviting patio accessible from the kitchen, with plenty of space for outdoor dining and relaxing, surrounded by Portuguese laurel and spring flowers. A pond is nestled under a willow tree, with a deck extending over its surface to make a perfect spot for a garden bench.

A well-organised vegetable patch and greenhouse provide homegrown produce throughout the year, and there are fruiting cherry, plum, greengage, pear and apple trees.

To one side of the garden is a historic timber barn set beneath a mature oak tree. The barn was dismantled and relocated from Tattingstone in the 1980s, and makes an excellent workshop and garden store.

Out and About

Framsden is a quiet village positioned around 10 miles north of Ipswich and just south of Debenham, in the heart of Suffolk. Most of its houses are clustered near the gothic church of St Mary's, surrounded by arable land and nature reserves.

The Grade II-listed local pub, the Framsden Greyhound, has recently reopened thanks to the efforts of the local community, a testament to the village's collective spirit. The pub serves excellent ales and home-cooked food, and hosts a programme of quizzes and events.

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There are plenty of opportunities to enjoy the Suffolk landscape nearby. For walking, there are 16 miles of meandering public footpaths that weave around Framsdan's meadows and ancient trees. There are also areas of outstanding natural beauty nearby, with the Fox Fritillary Meadow on the edge of the village, with a display of purple-chequered and white fritillaries each spring. The reserve is set to re-open to the public in 2026 following a fallow year.

The stunning Suffolk coastline with vast tracts of reedbeds, heath and beach is around 40 minutes by car. It is noted for its beauty and, increasingly, its cultural attractions, including Snape Maltings, an internationally renowned cultural centre housing a mix of malthouses and granaries dating from the mid-19th century, with several exhibitions throughout the year. It also hosts the Aldeburgh Festival, a 24-day event celebrating the transformative impact of music and the arts. For architectural delights, Helmingham Hall is a two-minute drive, a lovely place for a stroll through the rose garden, orchards and formal plantings.

The village of Debenham is a seven-minute drive. Here, there is a Co-op and an excellent grocer, a butcher, and several independent cafes. The River Green Café and Deli, the Woolpack pub, and the Debenham Lion are popular spots. Debenham also has a GP surgery and a veterinary practice.

Framlingham is a 15-minute drive away with popular restaurants and cafes including The Station and Watson and Walpole, and Leo's Deli. The Leaping Hare at Wyken is a celebrated vineyard restaurant set in a medieval converted barn amid a 1,200-acre farm. Spanish delicatessen, Emmett's, can be found in nearby Peasenhall. There are regular farmers' markets in Framlingham, Eye, Diss and Aldeburgh, and vineyards in Monk Soham and just outside Framlingham. Woodbridge is approximately 20 minutes' drive away and has a supermarket, independent shops, useful services, and various restaurants, pubs and cafes.

There are several well-regarded schools in the area at both primary and upper level, including those in Debenham, Framlingham and Brandeston.

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Ipswich and Stowmarket train stations are around 20 minutes away from the house, both offering regular railway connections to London Liverpool Street.

Council Tax Band: E



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About

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