

INIGO



The Southwest Corner

WESTERHAM, KENT

SOLD

Elevated high in Toys Hill, a hamlet on the periphery of Westerham, Kent, this six-bedroom detached house is characterised by a wealth of early 20th-century features including hung tile elevations, wisteria-shaded loggia and period fireplaces. It has an internal plan of 2,480 sq ft, with the entire ground floor given over to a series of interconnected and gracefully appointed living spaces. The dining room provides direct access to a south-facing terrace and garden beyond, both with breathtaking views across nearby Hever and towards Ashdown Forest. Despite its bucolic location, the house is close to both Sevenoaks and Oxted stations, where trains run to central London in as little as 22 minutes.

Setting The Scene

Mentioned in the Domesday Book, Westerham has a long history – evident in part from its impressive number of listed period buildings. The Westerham Hoard, however, speaks to even earlier origins: in 1927, evidence of a settlement from 200 BC was discovered in the town and included Iron Age coins depicting Apollo.

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The Southwest Corner was built in 1922 on a plot carved off from the Chartwell Estate. Chartwell – now owned by the National Trust – is best known as the former home of Winton Churchill and his family. Built for the Oppenheimer family with no expense spared, The Southwest Corner retains many of the architectural hallmarks of the period in which it was built and has staggeringly green views from windows along each aspect. Its expansive gardens border the National Trust's Toys Hill Estate, a 200-acre strong expanse that has been designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest on account of its biodiversity. Despite its period pedigree, the house has benefitted from contemporary interventions including an air-source heat pump.

The Grand Tour

Emerging along a quiet, exceptionally leafy country road, the house's pretty ivy-covered façade belies the expansive plan that unfolds beyond. A neat porch area sits next to a casement window with direct sight-lines out across the countryside at the rear.



Several living spaces make up the ground-floor plan, each with a distinct character. On one side is the west-facing family room, its warm terracotta-toned walls in Edward Bulmer's 'Header' and honeyed Amtico floorboards enhanced by the light that enters along three sides. Double doors open to the garden, with plenty of room in front for a well-placed armchair. There is a sitting room behind, appointed in deep 'Brunswick Green' also by Edward Bulmer and with newly installed sisal carpet from Crucial Trading underfoot. The ruddy tones of an original brick fireplace surround pair beautifully with the crimson red glazed tile hearth beneath.

The dining room is arranged centrally, bridging the space between the sitting rooms and the kitchen at either end of the plan. Its walls are finished in 'Schoolhouse White' by Farrow and Ball colour mixed in Earthborn paint, a neutral shade that cleverly allows the foliage-filled backdrop seen through a set of original French doors centre stage. The terrace adjoins here for easy summertime entertaining.

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A door on the east wall opens into the open-plan kitchen and breakfast room. Formed of farmhouse-style Smallbone units, the kitchen has plenty of room for a range cooker in addition to its other integrated appliances. White tiles form a splash-back, interspersed with sweet flower-patterned variations. Here, the flooring is finished with the original rust-toned terracotta quarry tiles. The second part of the space is arranged as an informal breakfast room with stunning views of the garden and countryside beyond. A WC and utility room complete the ground-floor plan.

Stairs wind up from the dining room to the first floor, where there are five restful bedrooms. The main bedroom is grounded by deep-toned floorboards and has a bank of built-in, timber-fronted storage space. The tongue and groove panels are original to the house and are echoed elsewhere. A window to one side overlooks greenery upon greenery, while a west-facing balcony provides a delightful spot to sit and watch the sunset. There is also a substantial en suite with a bath, a shower and a second red-brick fire surround.

Two of the additional bedrooms on this floor also share a balcony, while all are served by a spacious family bathroom with a bath and a shower. The sixth bedroom – or quiet home office – is tucked away on the second storey.

The Great Outdoors

Established gardens surround the house and are filled with mature trees and shrubbery. A loving hand has tended to the garden for many years, curating banks of azaleas, rhododendrons, and camellias. Come spring, the beds are ablaze with alliums and irises, and apple, pear, cherry, and magnolia trees are crowned with a dusting of pastel blossom. The sloping rear lawn has raised planters for vegetable growing as well as a pear tree and tumbles down towards the entrance gate and garage. The grounds here are extensive and include a second levelled lawn, perfect for a kick-about or picnic. Stretching up the hill behind is a wooded area that borders the National Trust's Toys Hill estate and provides direct access for rambling walks.

Out and About

Westerham is a well-served town in the heart of Kent's rolling landscape. It is home to a host of independent and national retailers as well as several pubs and eateries. Brunch in Westerham serves delicious pastries and coffees, while the The Courtyard has more traditional fare.

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Larger amenities, including branches of several large supermarkets, can be found in Sevenoaks, a 15-minute drive from the house. Here, a wide range of restaurants and coffee shops can be found, including an outpost of Gail's, Giggling Squid and Turkish restaurant Hattusa.

The wider area is known for its exceptional schooling options, both state and privately run. Within easy reach are Hazelwood, Caterham, Woldingham, Radnor House, Ide Hill Primary, Sevenoaks School, Weald of Kent Grammar, Tonbridge and Tunbridge Wells grammar schools and The Judd School.

Travel into the capital is quick and convenient from either Sevenoaks station, a 15-minute drive away, or Oxted, an 11-minute drive away; trains run to London Bridge from the former in 22 minutes, while services to London Victoria from the latter take approximately 40 minutes. The national motorway (M25) can be joined at Junction 5, which is under 10 minutes away.

Council Tax Band: H

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About

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