

INIGO



The Old Manse

BECKINGTON, SOMERSET

£900,000 FREEHOLD

A remarkable Grade II*-listed six-bedroom house, The Old Manse is situated around three miles north of Frome, one of Somerset's best loved historic towns. Its origins lie in the 15th century; inside, grand stone fireplaces sit alongside moulded plasterwork ceilings and timeworn pine floorboards. The house has three storeys and two self-contained apartments that lend to flexible living arrangements. There is also a thriving garden at the rear, carefully cultivated over the years to provide colour and texture all year round.

Setting the Scene

Until the 17th century, Frome was a larger town than nearby Bath; it grew in prominence due to the early wool and cloth industry, later growing a reputation for metal-working and printing. It has a large number of listed buildings, many of which are built from the local vernacular stone.

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The Old Manse lies in Beckington, a small and close-knit village to the north of Frome's centre. The house's earliest origins date from about 1470, though much of what remains today is from the 17th century. It has a series of remarkable features – not least a Jacobean oak staircase, or the fine moulded strapwork ceiling that bears the coats of arms of Henry VIII and Catherine of Aragon. It features in 'England's Thousand Best Houses' by Sir Simon Jenkins, a former chairman of the National Trust.

The Grand Tour

The Old Manse lies on Bath Road, an exceedingly characterful street lined with handsome stone fronted houses. A sense of its proportion can be garnered from its street-facing profile: three gable ends rise above three storeys of leaded, stone-mullioned windows.

A gate from the street provides passage into a courtyard space that bridges the gap between inside and out. There is plenty of space here for potted plants as well as shoe, coat and umbrella storage.

Large flagstones run underfoot from here into the main hallway, which sits at the intersecting points of the house's plan. On the left and right of the plan are two bedrooms; one has access to a generous kitchen, with a secondary point of access, while the other has an adjoining utility room, boot room with garden access and a shower room. The flexible design of these spaces, as well as their independence, makes them ideal guest suites or living quarters for older relatives.

A relic of the house's early history, the Jacobean staircase that connects the house's three storeys is arresting. It coils up to the first floor, where a reception room – known as 'The Great Room' – sits in the south-easterly corner. Double windows draw in plenty of light, while a log fire in an original stone fireplace cultivates a cosy ambiance during the winter. Particularly striking is the room's moulded ceiling, which bears the arms of Henry VIII and Catherine of Aragon.



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A dining room adjoins this room, with the kitchen beyond. Plenty of open storage provides space to display favourite crockery or ceramics, and a Stoves oven is a handy tool for cooking up a celebratory feast. There is space here for a second informal dining space. Darkly stained pine floorboards run underfoot here, as in the adjoining reception rooms. A moulded plaster overmantle marriage plaque adorns one wall.

The first-floor plan is completed by a bathroom with handy storage space. The same central staircase ascends to the second floor, where there are four bedrooms. All bar one overlook the characterful streetscape in front and have simple white walls that draw attention to exposed beams.

The primary bedroom is set up a pair of steps, lending it a slightly delineated feel. Its walls are papered with a charming ditsy green floral pattern – redolent of the house's enchanting garden. A second bathroom on this floor lies at the back, well-placed to take in the abundant greenery at the rear.

The Great Outdoors

Over their time at The Old Manse, the current owners – who are keen horticulturalists – have lovingly tended to the gardens, creating a patchwork of interconnected spaces with perennial visual interest.

Tall tulip, maple and cypress trees stand alongside an assortment of shrubs and bushes including wisteria, rosemary, and bay creating pockets of shady respite. Generous lawns lend space for a summertime kickabout, while a patio close to the house is a delightful spot for long summer lunches. Colourful plantings have taken root here and include roses, bluebells, and forget-me-nots.

Out and About

The Old Manse is situated in Beckington, a small village with a strong sense of community. It has two schools as well as two pubs – The Woolpack and The Foresters – as well as a farm shop and the wonderful Mes Amis cafe/deli.

Frome lies three miles south of Beckington. Its popularity has surged in recent years; the town is routinely named one of the best places to live in the UK, thanks to its thriving cultural scene, historic architecture, and beautiful surrounding countryside.

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Babington House is reachable in around 15 minutes by car and Bruton's excellent dining options include the Michelin-starred Osip II, The Old Pharmacy, At the Chapel. The Newt and Roth Bar and Grill at Hauser and Wirth gallery are around 15 miles to the south. In nearby Batcombe, Margot Henderson's The Three Horseshoes adds to the excellent dining options in the area.

North Somerset is well-renowned for its wealth of local produce, independent food producers and growers. Westcombe Dairy is easily reached for award-winning cheese and charcuterie. Landrace Bakery's new outpost is now conveniently on-site, offering a daily dose of sourdough bread made from stoneground UK grains milled at the new Landrace Mill, alongside Brickells ice cream and Woodshedding Beer. There is a good selection of farm shops for organic produce, including The Slow Farming Company, a local distillery, and for field-grown flowers and herbs, Re-Rooting is also nearby.

Beckington First CofE School and private Springmead School lie within walking distance of the house. There are further schooling options in Frome, as well as plenty of well-regarded private options in Bath.

Westbury station is six miles (a 17-minute drive) from the house and runs services in as little as 85 minutes, or to Bath in around 24 minutes. Regular buses run between Beckington and Frome, Bath and Trowbridge.

Council Tax Band: B

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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.