

INIGO



The Rookery

ROCKLAND ALL SAINTS, NORFOLK
SOLD

Hidden in plain sight at the centre of the characterful village of Rockland All Saints, Norfolk, this Grade-II listed house and its grounds feel completely private, immersed in the greenery of their extensive and secluded surroundings. The village is well-served by a shop, pub, post office, and primary school. Appearing at the end of a swathe of lawned driveway, the house is a charming palimpsest; additions and alterations to the house's 16th-century bones have resulted in a wonderfully idiosyncratic home with a variety of unique spaces. The current owner has carried out significant work to secure the future of the building, which is now ready for its next chapter.

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Setting the Scene

At its core, a pegged plank and muntin screen and timber mullioned window reflect the house's 16th and 17th-century origins. Through the layering of various decorative modifications undertaken throughout its history, the house represents a tapestry of different styles. The pairings of materials used are typical of this part of Norfolk, particularly the clay lump and roughcast render in the main body of the house, and the flint and brick in the later extension. The large pond to the rear, one of three within the area, was possibly created when clay was excavated to build the house.

During the early twentieth century, the house was home to Hilary Holman Hunt, son of the Pre-Raphaelite artist William Holman Hunt. During World War II he constructed an air raid shelter for the village within a wooded area of the grounds; today, a plaque inside the structure is inscribed with his name. For more information, please see the History section.

The Grand Tour

When viewed from the drive, there is an air of whimsy to the house's unusual proportions draped in wisteria. Its large chimneys, timber transom and mullion leaded windows are typical of 17th-century East Anglian houses. The house has many wonderful architectural details; while the current owners have replaced the roof, carried out maintenance works, updated the bathroom at first floor and replaced the flooring in the conservatory, much of the house remains in original condition and some services require updating.

The red front door opens into a broad hallway at the historic core of the house, where a plank and muntin screen frames a view into the spacious dining room. The proportions and scale of the sequential living spaces that make up the ground floor are remarkably generous for the period of the building, evidence of the house's historic importance. Both broad and tall, they contain within them an abundance of original features.

In the living room, the historic bones of the building are made apparent: ornate chamfered beams cross the ceiling, a timber mullioned window frames views of mature trees and a cavernous inglenook fireplace hosts a brick-backed open fire. To one side, an alcove crowned with a fluted concha makes a feature of storage.

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At the other end of the house, the kitchen is spacious and has leaded windows that look out onto both front and back gardens. A working Rayburn oven sits alongside a modern electric Rangemaster stove.

Leading on from the kitchen are a series of spaces that represent enormous potential, encompassing a large utility space with sink, boiler room and end storeroom with two large windows and potential for studio space. A remnant of the building's agricultural past, these areas are finished externally with white-washed cobbles and create a protected courtyard to the rear.

Beyond the core longhouse form of the house are two substantial Edwardian additions including a capacious billiard room, its cross-gabled cruciform ceiling striped with black beams and joists. Focus is shared between the exquisite ceiling and the enchanting views framed by a double-height arched window. A secret door set flush with the wall leads to an ancillary space, and another door leads through to a study space with external access to the courtyard and down to a cellar store room.

Running along the length of the original longhouse is a timber-framed conservatory that is home to a thriving centenarian grapevine. Recently laid ornate tiles reflect the light in an almost ethereal way. The open-plan space was designed for events and has a strong party legacy, having seen soirées throughout the 20th century; a patio beyond lends the option for gatherings to spill outside in mild weather.

A broad staircase leads up to a generous hallway with a bathroom renovated to include a shower over a freestanding cast-iron bath, large ceramic pedestal sink and wonderful views of the mature gardens.

Large bedrooms sit at each end of the first floor, one of which has an anteroom with potential for use as a study or dressing room. Between them are two further well-proportioned bedrooms served by sinks and back-to-back wardrobes, and with views out to the pond.

A similar layout is found on the second floor, with bedrooms that bookend the plan and a long corridor that runs between them. Two further bedrooms sit side-by-side looking out onto the garden and alongside a bathroom is well-lit by a gable window.

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The Great Outdoors

Borders created by mature horse chestnut trees, Scots pine trees and laurel shrubs envelope the home's verdant and wells-structured grounds, fostering a sense of seclusion despite its central village location.

From the road, a lawned drive, lined with silver birch trees and yew hedges, swoops underneath a substantial oak tree to the front door. Mid-20th-century outbuildings corral around to create a yard, originally used as a garage and stables.

The gardens open out to the rear and are centred around a scenic pond that is a true haven for wildlife. The paved patio close to the house is framed by raised beds of roses, and steps down onto a lawn giving space and perspective to the view.

Within a wooded area in the south-west corner is a timber treehouse and a concrete air raid shelter built by previous resident Hilary Holman Hunt for use by the village during the second world war. Paths track through the trees and loop around the pond where breaks in the vegetation frame idyllic views of the house across the water.

Out and About

Rocklands All Saints is a small village well-served by a community-run shop and café, alongside a primary school and a pub. Access to the countryside at hand and the expanse of Thetford Forest is a 20-minute drive away. Trains from nearby Attleborough run to London Liverpool Street in two hours and 20 minutes, and Norwich in 18.

Norwich is a thriving small city with a diverse range of cultural, sports, dining and shopping opportunities. The Lanes, a series of medieval streets in the city centre (Norwich being the most complete medieval city in Britain) recently won the city the Great British High Street of the Year Award. There is also an international airport, the delightful Sainsbury's Art Centre, marinas and boatyards.

The North Norfolk coast can be reached within an hour and is renowned as one of the most beautiful areas of the UK, with incredible sandy beaches such as Holkham and beautiful protected marshland. It is notable for its number of outstanding places to eat out and vibrant villages and towns.

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Council Tax Band: G

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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.