

INIGO



Down Park West

CRAWLEY DOWN, WEST SUSSEX

£2,150,000 FREEHOLD

Nestled in the tranquil village of Crawley Down in the heart of the West Sussex countryside, this magnificent six-bedroom house forms the westerly wing of a 19th-century country estate. It was built in the 1860s by local barrister James Harrison and retains many of its original features, including exquisitely detailed external stonework, original tiling and incredibly ornate Arts and Crafts fretwork. This 5,000 sq ft home extends over three storeys, and there is an additional outbuilding with potential to transform into an annexe. Around 1.6 acres of gardens surround the house, which sits close to the High Weald and South Downs Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Despite its rural idyll, the house is well connected: a nearby rail station at Three Bridges provides services to London Bridge in 35 minutes, and Gatwick airport is a 10-minute drive away.

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Setting the Scene

Down Park mansion was built in the 1860s on the site of what was previously known as Shepherd's Hole Farm, as a home for local barrister James Harrison – who later became MP for Kilmarnock Burghs. While retaining the farm, Harrison built what was known as a complete gentleman's estate on the land, comprising ornamental and kitchen gardens, boating ponds, lodges, coach houses and stables, as well as the mansion itself. The house later housed soldiers during WWI; an Anderson shelter is still in place in the garden, and diamond-shaped markings can still be seen on some windows, an echo of the tape used to protect the original glazing.



Graceful arched windows and ornate brickwork are key features in this house's elegant exterior, and wisteria delicately embraces the west side of the house. The house as a whole was sympathetically divided in the 1950s and now comprises three residences, of which this is the primary portion, with grounds of 1.6 acres for sole use of this home. Remarkably, given its storied past, the house remains unlisted. In more recent years, it has been featured as inspiration on George Clarke's 'Old House, New Home', published in 25 Beautiful Homes and Homes & Antiques magazines and described in 'Victorian Modern: A Design Bible for the Modern Home' by Jo Leavers.

The Grand Tour

Wrought-iron gates at the end of a private road lead to a driveway lined with 300-year-old oak trees – a fittingly peaceful approach that sets the tone for what lies within.

Two stone steps lead to an elaborate white-painted door topped with a semi-circular fan-light and flanked by large arched windows. An ornate stone frieze wraps around the façade from which starlings and owls perch within native plant species including holly and agapanthus.

Entry is to a generous entrance hall, a magnificently voluminous space with soaring ceilings and beautiful original tiles underfoot. Wood panelling on the walls is washed in a dark cream hue, 'Cornforth' by Farrow and Ball, and an original fireplace is offset by a dramatic double-height mantelpiece with elegant columns. Overhead, original frescos top the doorways.

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There are a series of exquisite original features across the house. Many of its doors date to the mid-19th century and are uniquely large.

To the left of the hall is an expansive bespoke and handmade kitchen and dining area, also set tall ceilings. Here, a cream-coloured Aga sits in the original fireplace, and there is an additional built-in oven. A marble-topped kitchen island with bar seating and suspended overhead lighting is ideally positioned for entertaining, and there is ample room for a dining table in front of the charming arched windows. Attractive oak parquet flooring paves underfoot.

An opulent drawing room is filled with natural light from tripartite arched windows. Original arched fretwork frames each window bay and the views of leafy trees beyond. Richly detailed cornicing adds character to the high soaring ceilings, nearing 4 metres high, which have elaborate plaster moulding patterns. There is an exquisitely detailed fireplace with beautiful tiling and stonework.

On the ground floor there is also a cosy snug which can be accessed via a secret door in the hallway, as well as a bathroom and a utility room.

A grand staircase sweeps up to the first floor. Here lie four comfortable double bedrooms. The principal bedroom has an original fireplace with double-height mantelpiece, and there is a roll-top bath with shower, plus attached en suite. Three windows provide serene views of the treetops.

Ascending the stairs leads to a further two bedrooms, one of which has a sloping roof and original wooden beams. There is an additional bathroom on this floor, with roll-top bath and separate shower.

Adjacent to the house is a newly constructed, two-storey oak-framed outbuilding, currently used as a studio and workspace but with potential to transform into an annexe pending relevant permissions.

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The Great Outdoors

The house sits in 1.6 acres of land, encompassing carefully tended lawns, oak and fir trees. The gravelled drive sweeps around a vast lawn and in spring, the banks are awash with bluebells and daffodils. Well-maintained flower beds surround the house and are filled with hydrangeas. There are also structured box plants that provide year-round interest.

The grounds attract an abundance of wildlife – deer and owls are just some of its passing visitors.

Out and About

The village of Crawley Down sits in the northeast corner of West Sussex, close to the borders of Surrey and Kent. The surrounding area is well-known for its undulating landscapes and breathtaking views, and the High Weald and South Downs Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty are within driving distance, as well as the wonderful Ashdown Forest.

Wakehurst country estate and botanical gardens is just a 10-minute drive from the house. National-Trust-maintained Nymans gardens is also close by, and has a Grade II*-listed garden and an ancient woodland to explore.

The cosy Duke's Head pub is just an 8-minute walk from the house, and Dal Nonno Italian restaurant is also close by. Further opportunities for dining and shopping are found in nearby East Grinstead, which also has a Waitrose. Numerous organic farms in the area provide excellent local produce, including local favourite Grange Farm Shop.

There are a number of excellent schooling options in the area, including the highly acclaimed Michael Hall Waldorf Steiner School, which is just a 19-minute drive away, and Tuners Hill Church of England Primary School. Other recommended options include Worth School, Ardingly College, Copthorne Prep, Brambletye School and Cumnor House.

Three Bridges rail station is a nine-minute drive away to the west and provides direct services to London Bridge in around 35 minutes. Gatwick Airport is just a 10-minute drive away, or a five-minute train journey from Three Bridges.

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.