



INTERIORS TO ADORE

Luxury period conversion to fall in love with

Manor Farm Barns, Blofield
William H Brown,
£305,000
Page 16



PRETTY AS A PICTURE

Lovely location for this fabulous city dwelling

Elm Hill House, Norwich
Jackson-Stops & Staff,
£375,000
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PROPERTY OF THE WEEK

Victorian pile has a few stories within its walls

This atmospheric Victorian house holds a fascinating story close to its heart; it was built out of gratitude to a wealthy lady who helped see a rector fulfil his dream of transforming a village church into an ornate "cathedral of the fields". Her reward was to be given a beautiful house which had detail that reflected that of the church, particularly seen in the number of arches throughout the property. However, there is more to tell because this house was also the home where Norfolk's much loved actor/comedian Stephen Fry grew up. **CAROLINE CULOT, EDP property correspondent**, enjoyed a marvellous visit to Booton House, Booton, for sale for **£995,000** with **Jackson-Stops & Staff**. See pages **2** and **3** for the full, compelling story.

■ And you can see the house yourself by watching my **Through the Keyhole** video at www.homes24.co.uk/edp or visit www.edp.co.uk and click on **homes 24**.

DREAM HOME



Quality, design and flair throughout

The Gables
Bedfords, £995,000
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BRIEF-CASE

Our legal eagle on conflict of interest

Philippa Rudd
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HOME AND ABROAD



Read our new columnist on buying overseas

Christopher Hall
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UNDER THE HAMMER

Day in the life of an auctioneer

Peter Horner
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true British institution

PROPERTY OF THE WEEK

BRIEF-CASE

This week **PHILIPPA RUDD** of Cozens-Hardy solicitors discusses ethics and conflict of interest.



I have just had my offer accepted on a house and I am trying to find a local solicitor to do the conveyancing for me. I asked the estate agent if I could use the same firm as the person selling the house but they said they did not think that this would be possible. Wouldn't this speed up the process?

The same firm of solicitors can only act for seller and buyer if both are existing clients, if both parties consent in writing and no conflict of interest arises – and providing that neither party is a property developer.

I have spoken to the solicitor recommended to me by the estate agents and he said that he would also act for my mortgage company providing he is on their panel. What does this mean?

Mortgage companies have panels of approved solicitors. The mortgage company will normally use the same solicitor as the buyer. They need the solicitor to check that the title and search results are in order and that it is safe for them to lend.

What if I wish to withhold information from my mortgage company such as the fact that I already have a mortgage on a house I can't sell? Could this situation also be a possible conflict of interest?

Solicitors have a duty of confidentiality to their clients, but this does not affect their duty to act in the best interests of each client. Therefore any relevant information should be forwarded to the mortgage company with your consent.

If you, as the buyer, will not agree to the information being given to your lender, then there will be a conflict between the solicitor's duty of confidentiality to you and the duty to act in the best interests of the lender.

Your solicitor would then have to cease acting for the lender and he may not be able to continue acting for you, so do bear in mind that anything you tell your solicitor may have to be disclosed to your lender.

■ **Philippa Rudd is a Partner with Cozens-Hardy LLP Solicitors, Castle Chambers, Opie Street, Norwich, NR1 3DP. Tel: 01603 625231 www.cozens-hardy.com**

■ **If you have a question or dilemma over the legalities of buying or selling a property which you would like to appear in this supplement, please contact Philippa by e-mailing caroline.culot@archant.co.uk**

■ **These questions and answers are not intended as a complete statement of the law. Specific legal advice should always be taken.**



The current owners – and I owe my sincere thanks to them for giving me such a detailed account of the house's history (and also for some very delicious chocolate lemon cakes on my visit) – have lived at the house for about four years and it is truly beautiful inside and out. You can instantly tell that no expense was spared when it was built, no short cuts taken, no cheaper materials used.

Elwin, who has had no actual architectural training, has evoked a slightly ecclesiastical feel with the arched doorways and windows.

There is an abundance of beautiful polished wood throughout this house which is deep and solid; there is a beautifully carved oak staircase with a decorative banister that goes up on the left hand side moulded against the wall – purely for show. There are many gorgeous marble fireplaces, even some in the bedrooms, which are thought to have been picked out by Miss Holley herself, along with a marble washstand in a downstairs cloakroom, elaborate fittings to the many shutters and what looks like ebony on some of the door handles.

You enter into a hall which leads into a beautiful large Victorian reception hall with a stunning original tiled floor, off which are the principal rooms such as a gorgeous drawing room decorated to perfection in powder blue with a very elaborate marble fireplace.

There is a fabulous formal dining room decorated in a rich crimson colour which is really striking. At the end of the hall there is a large kitchen with a black and white chequered floor, a vaulted ceiling, contemporary units painted in pale lemon and a large central island with double thickness granite work surfaces.

Leading off the kitchen is a conservatory, which the owners put on and which overlooks the garden and the view of the many trees they planted. The house is set out over three floors, with a second staircase, and on the first there are three bedrooms, two bathrooms and a dressing room. The master bedroom suite is just incredible; with a large bedroom transformed into an elegant dressing room with another large arch. Many of the rooms have gorgeous wallpaper and I particularly loved the bathroom with beautiful balloons adorning the walls and a blind in the same fabric.

In fact, this house would be lovely for a family with young children as there is a room where the owners' grandchildren visit which has a hand painted mural of a Beatrix Potter woodland scene.

On the top floor, which is very spacious with a long landing and high ceilings, there are three more bedrooms. I wonder if one of those was Stephen Fry's all those years ago?

Outside, there is an annexe which is currently used as a holiday let with two bedrooms, a kitchen and sitting room, as well as a lovely landscaped garden of about an acre. It is a truly magnificent house and, as the owner said to me, somehow it seems a pity that no one knows what Miss Holley looked like or very much about her – yet she had such a big impact on making one man's dream a reality.

■ **Booton House is for sale for £995,000 with Jackson-Stops and Staff on 01603 612333.**

■ **Do you know any more about the history of the house and if you are Stephen Fry (and, apparently, he does like reading the EDP), please email me about your experiences growing up at the property at caroline.culot@archant.co.uk We would love to hear from you!**