

THE MODERN HOUSE



Harlow, Essex
£550,000 Freehold

Brooklane Field

This fine example of mid-century architecture was designed in 1960 by John Graham, a leading modernist architect who worked closely alongside Sir Frederick Gibberd in the development of Harlow New Town. Designed for himself and his wife, the timber-framed Colt House (1,600 sqft) and the garden studio (over 500 sq ft) lie low in a secluded plot, orientated towards private south-facing gardens and a large ancient oak tree, with a swimming pool on the easterly side. Situated in a quiet residential area, Harlow's town centre and train station are within easy reach, where direct services connect to Liverpool Street in around 30 minutes and Tottenham Hale in around 20 minutes.

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The Architect

John A. Graham worked under Sir Frederick Gibberd, highly regarded as Britain's leading architect-planner of the mid-century era. He joined the Harlow office of Frederick Gibberd and Partners in 1956 and became a partner in 1965. He designed the mosaic-clad rooftop viewing room of the original Harlow Town Hall and the UK's first purpose-built indoor community sports centre, as well as the Harvey Centre and Adams House. His sensitive additions to Old Harlow High Street in the early 1970s won a European Council Architecture Heritage award. For further details, see the History section below.

The Tour

Occupying a substantial corner plot in a quiet residential cul-de-sac, the house and gardens are bordered by fields and open countryside. The house is set back from the road by a private driveway and garage (currently used as a gallery space) providing ample off-street parking.

A painted brick wall ensures privacy and seclusion and naturally orientates the living spaces toward the rear gardens. The primary entrance, set discreetly to one side of a cedar shingle and brickwork façade, leads into the central hallway. A series of free-flowing living spaces, unfold across the central plan.

Replete with original features and almost entirely in its original condition, the house will require updating and John Graham's original drawings for the house and garden will be included. Defining mid-century features have been well retained throughout both the house and the large garden studio, bringing authentic charm and character to the interior.

A trio of full-height picture windows extend across the southerly side of the living room, ensuring constant visual connection with the gardens and an excellent quality of natural light throughout the course of the day. Wooden flooring runs underfoot, pairing well with the timber-clad walls. A fireplace forms a natural centrepiece.

The dining area lies on the westerly side of the room, separated by a folding curtain. The original glazed serving hatch connects to the kitchen, where mid-century cabinetry remains intact, leading through to the utility space with external access to the side passageway.

There are two bedrooms, a study which could easily be used as a third bedroom, and a family bathroom. The main bedroom has an en suite bathroom, a good provision of in-built cabinetry and great views onto the gardens.

Independent of the main house, the garden studio lies on the easterly side of the site and offers great flexibility of use as a creative studio, workshop, or additional living space. Built of concrete block with a plywood panel roof, expansive glazing ensures excellent natural light, while track lighting illuminates overhead. A cloakroom is positioned to one side.



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Outdoor Space

The gardens form an integral part of the overall experience of the home at Brooklane Field, primarily laid to lawn with an ancient oak tree positioned centrally. The swimming pool is in need of some remedial work but could be re-instated as a fantastic feature. Mature trees and hedging form the boundary, offering excellent privacy and seclusion.

Area Guide

The house is located in southeast Harlow, which was designated a 'new town' on 25 March 1947. It was one of several new towns built under the New Towns Act of 1946, passed after World War II to ease overcrowding in London and offer a vision of modern living. Sir Frederick Gibberd intended Harlow to be an outstanding example of the comfortable marriage of town and country, with lots of well-integrated open space to separate residential neighbourhoods and commercial zones.

There are some fantastic independent cafés, pubs and restaurants nearby, notably Griffin Café, The Rainbow & Dove, New Ground Café and Mui & Koko Noodle Bar. Just a 10-minute drive away is The Gibberd Garden, a beautiful Grade II-listed landscaped garden created by Sir Frederick Gibberd and his wife Patricia. With their former home of nearly 50 years at its centre, the garden comprises lawns, woodland and their personal collection of modern sculpture and architectural pieces, with a tearoom and a lively programme comprising music, theatre, art and writing events throughout the warmer months.

An expanse of green pasture lies just south of the home and provides walking access to Harlow Common Woods and Latton Woods, which has mature pines, an older broadleaf wood and primroses in spring. Parndon Wood Nature Reserve is less than a 10-minute drive away, which has two beautiful walking trails, a café and a centre for children's activities. Sunset Sessions is a series of open-air music events that take place here throughout the summer months.

With easy access to the M11, north London is less than one hour's drive away. Stratford Westfield is around 25 minutes by car and Canary Wharf is around a 40-minute drive. Central Line services run from Epping station, a 10-minute drive from the house, and Harlow Town Station runs Stansted Express services to London Liverpool Street in 30 minutes. Stansted International Airport is less than 20 minutes away by car.

Council Tax Band: E

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About

The Modern House is an estate agency that helps people live in more thoughtful and beautiful ways. We believe in design as a powerful force for good. Inspired by the principles of modernism, we represent design-led homes across the UK which celebrate light, space and a truth to materials. Esquire credits The Modern House with “rewriting the rulebook on estate agency” and GQ voted us “one of the best things in the world”.