

THE MODERN HOUSE



St Ives, Cornwall
Sold

Bishops Road

This wonderful four-bedroom house is positioned on an elevated position in St Ives, with far-reaching views over the town and its harbour. Built in 1928 by the artist Borlase Smart, the house is a fantastic example of early modernist architecture, one of the few of this period to be found in this part of Cornwall. The house extends to over 3,100 sq ft and is surrounded by approximately a quarter of an acre of hydrangea-filled gardens. Original features have been brilliantly preserved, including its Crittall windows, tiled windowsills and ornate fireplaces. There is also a brilliant studio space found in the garden, as well as a garage.

The Architect

Robert Borlase Smart (1881 – 1947) was known principally as an artist and was a founding member of the St. Ives School following his return from the First World War. He contributed much to the town, serving on the Home Guard and on the Town Council as leader of the Sea Scouts. He also contributed to Western Morning News and Illustrated Western Weekly News from 1901 to 1913 as an arts editor and critic.

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The artistic community enjoyed his ongoing support, particularly after he established the St. Ives School of Painting in the historic Porthmeor Studios in 1938. He was a proponent of both traditional and modern approaches to art, forging relationships with Ben Nicholson, Barbara Hepworth and Peter Lanyon, inviting them to exhibit their work alongside his in his Porthmeor studio. The Penwith Gallery was built in his honour for his contribution to Cornwall's modern art movement.

Smart moved to St Ives in 1919 to occupy a studio, and in 1928, he built Bishops Road. With its large expanses of glass, the house celebrates the incredible sea views he spent much of his time painting.

The Tour

Entry to the house is into a wide entrance lobby lined with terracotta tiles, which leads into the open-plan kitchen and dining room. This has been clad in wooden boards set behind a combination of freestanding units and white cabinetry with wooden worktops. A warming wood-burning stove can be found in the fireplace. From here, a door opens straight onto the terrace with views over the planted borders to the sea.

A reception hall leads to a library where incredible Crittall windows bathe the room in light, and a Crittall door opens to the south-east facing garden. One wall is lined with built-in bookshelves, while the floors are the original narrow wooden boards.

The sitting room lies on the eastern side of the house. A wonderful space, it has another wall comprising three large and original Crittall windows. Panelling has been applied to the ceiling, and a big sculptural fireplace has a working fire. Through two decorative arches lies the sunroom, where Crittall doors open straight into the south-facing garden.

An original wooden staircase, which is now painted white, ascends to another wide corridor with sweeping views over the harbour and the sea. There are four bedrooms on this floor, although they are currently set up as three bedrooms with a useful study. The principal suite unfolds over one-half of this floor; in the large dual-aspect principal bedroom, floors have been painted black and contrast with the white walls. This, in turn, leads to the study, which opens into the bathroom. Here, original black brick tiles line the walls, and a chrome rainfall shower head has been fitted above the bath.

At the other side of the house is another generous double, this time with a large en suite bathroom with a fantastic checkerboard floor. There is another bedroom with an en suite bathroom also on this floor.

In the garden, a playful octagonal outbuilding provides studio space for the house. There is also a garage.

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Outdoor Space

The house is surrounded by an unusually large garden of approximately a quarter of an acre. On an elevated position in St Ives, the sun terrace at the front of the house enjoys expansive views over the town's rooftops, harbour and the sea. It is possible to see weather fronts rolling in and incredible sunrises and sunsets from this spectacular vantage point. The garden is full of beautiful mature shrubs, plants and trees, with plenty of shady spots to replenish after a long day in the Cornish sun.

The Area

The house is in a fantastic position in St Ives, an area which has long been associated with artists attracted by the evocative Atlantic light, the sea and the historic architecture, including its 20th-century school of sculptors, painters and ceramicists. As a result, St Ives has many galleries, from the Tate, the Penwith Gallery, the wonderfully preserved Barbara Hepworth Museum and Sculpture Garden, and Leach Pottery, as well as many smaller, independent galleries including New Craftsman Gallery and Anima Mundi.

The town is full of fantastic eateries, cafes and independent shops, including the newly opened wine bar and coffee shop St Eia, serving natural wines and small plates, Little Palais, which again offers low-intervention wine and cocktails, and tasty seafood at Porthmeor Beach Café.

It is also home to an array of beautiful beaches and rambling walks. While Porthmeor is probably its busiest, there's a smaller cove on The Island, a stretch of headland crowned by a chapel and complete with fishing-themed tiles by Bernard Leach. The 630-mile South West Coast Path also runs through St Ives and offers fantastic walks in both directions. Heading west leads to the pretty village of Zennor and further to the Penwith peninsula. East leads towards Portreath and Newquay.

In terms of transport links, there are direct trains from Paddington to nearby St Erth in under 5 hours, and another connecting train from there to St Ives in 10 minutes. The house is a short drive from many other popular parts of Cornwall, from the Helston River to Penzance and Falmouth, to name a few.

Council Tax Band: G

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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”.