

THE MODERN HOUSE



Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire
Sold

Chesham Avenue

This expansive house on Chesham Avenue in Milton Keynes was built in 1981 as part of the Homeworld exhibition, a showcase of innovative and experimental houses designed by architects from across the globe, built in the Bradwell Common area. This house – The Pyramid House – was designed by Wigley Fox and unfolds over 3,335 sq ft, comprising four bedrooms, large living spaces and a beautifully maintained garden. There is also a large studio in the garden of over 310 sqft, which was built by Pod Space; an eminently flexible space that would suit a variety of uses. For more information on the Homeworld exhibition and the construction of the house, please see the History section below.

The Tour

The unique shape and tiled façade of The Pyramid House creates an utterly distinctive silhouette amidst the beautiful gardens. There is a large private driveway in front of the house with space for at least six cars; there is an integral garage with an electric car charging point plus a separate garage with space for two further cars, as well as a carport.

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The current owners have replaced much of the double glazing, as well as the cedar cladding, flat roof section and upper windows and doors, which were all replaced in 2015. The living room glazing on both upper and lower levels faces southwest; this, when combined with the glass top of the pyramid, makes excellent use of passive solar gain – indeed, the upstairs living area often doesn't need heating on a sunny winter's day.

The house is set over three floors, with a striking spiral staircase at its centre that links each level. The kitchen/dining area contains units by Rotpunkt and has been designed with a variety of timber patterns and finishes to create a textured yet harmonious space; diagonal timber ceilings have been beautifully paired with horizontal, darker timber on the kitchen work surface and Marmoleum flooring. Large Velux windows let in plenty of natural light.

The ground floor living area was designed by Laurence Llewelyn-Bowen in 2002 as part of the BBC's Homefront programme and features a one-off carpet, designed specifically for this house. The red, orange and white pattern provides a colourful backdrop for the diagonal timber wall cladding and built-in shelving, as well as the large lightboxes on the wall, also designed by Laurence Llewelyn-Bowen. Full-height doors open from the lower section of the split level directly onto the garden and let in copious amounts of sunlight.

The four bedrooms can be found at the rear of the ground floor plan. The main bedroom has a beautiful en suite bathroom and there is also a family bathroom on this level. The bedrooms have been executed in a neutral palette and are filled with light that enters through large Velux windows. One of the bedrooms is currently used as an office but would work equally well as a single bedroom.

The staircase spirals up to the upper level of the house, where a large living room unfolds underneath the pyramid glazing that tops the house. The glazed roof allows natural light to stream in throughout the day and filter across all the levels. There are multiple walk-in cupboards that lie off the living room, providing ample storage space.

The basement level is a fully habitable room and has been used variously over the years as an office and games room; it also provides plenty of storage space. It is accessible via the spiral staircase that descends from the ground floor.



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There is also a large studio in the garden, which was built by Pod Space; this is currently used as a gym/music room but is an eminently flexible space that would suit a variety of uses; the current owners often use it as an office space. It has a contemporary, dark grey façade, clad in cedar to match that of the house, and is surrounded by a decked timber area – also cedar – that provides plenty of space for seating and alfresco dining. The interiors are insulated with acoustic plasterboard and sound glass, topped by a sedum roof, and the external sliding screens are cedar; useful for particularly bright days, as the space has an excellent quality of natural light. Heating is available via an air source pump, which can also be used as air conditioning. The side door lines up with the window in the fourth bedroom to give the option of joining the house to the pod at a later date if required.

Outdoor Space

The garden has been recently re-landscaped and is home to a mixture of grass, gravel and decked timber sections, making it a wonderfully versatile space with opportunities for planting, dining and relaxing. It can be accessed either via large doors that open from the ground floor or from a timber staircase that descends from the upper level of the house.

The Area

The house is around a 20-minute walk from the centre of Milton Keynes. The town was built in the 1960s; although it is a new town, the site's history stretches back well into the Middle Ages and as a result, it is a wonderful mixture of old and new; traditional and contemporary. Several of the 20th century's most eminent urban planners worked on the creation of Milton Keynes, including Lord Norman Foster, Sir Richard MacCormac and Ralph Erskine.

On its northern boundary is the beautiful River Ouse, while the town centre has a variety of shopping and dining options, from traditional pubs to contemporary cuisine. The main shopping centre is within easy walking distance of the house, as is The Hub, which contains plenty of amenities. There is an indoor ski slope plus skydiving and a cinema at Xscape. Milton Keynes is also home to Bletchley Park, the famous World War II code-breaking site, which is now open to visitors.

Pyramid House is a 20-minute walk to Milton Keynes train station, which runs regular services to London Euston, with a journey time of 40 minutes, and also to the North.

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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”.