

THE MODERN HOUSE



*Totnes, Devon
Sold*

Higher Westonfields

This striking six-bedroom modern home, designed in 2018 by the architect Andrew Kirby, is set among vast private gardens in a secluded position on the edge of Totnes, Devon. Characterised by clean architectural lines, expansive glazing and cedar shingle cladding, the interior living space of over 2,230 sq ft takes an exacting approach to light and space, with substantial glazing framing southwesterly views toward Dartmoor. Designed to Passivhaus standards, the house is incredibly energy efficient, and the location is excellent for easy access to the coastline, the River Dart, and Totnes town centre, reachable on foot in around 10 minutes. Rail services connect from Totnes to London Paddington in under three hours.

The Architect

Andrew Kirby Architects (A.K.A) is a RIBA Chartered Architects Practice and Certified Passivhaus designer based in Totnes. Established in 2005, the practice delivers private residential eco projects alongside architectural services and master planning across the housing, education, leisure and conservation sectors.

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Environmental Performance

A sustainable approach to the build and the overall energy efficiency of the house were key to the design. The building fabric combines the best of natural low embodied energy materials with hi-tech precision construction. The timber frame has been super insulated with Superglass (80% recycled glass bottles), with alu clad composite triple-glazing. The airtightness target is less than 1.0 ACH, with heating demand less than 14 kWh/msq. A Mechanical Ventilation and Heat Recovery (MVHR) system ensures a constant flow of fresh air and a first floor overhang ensures light and heat are well controlled during summer months.

The Tour

The house lies at the foot of a quiet lane off a residential road, occupying an elevated corner plot which feels immediately private and secluded on the approach. A driveway offers a generous provision of private parking for several vehicles, and the front gardens, primarily laid to lawn, lead up to the main entrance.

The striking external façade is defined by cedar shingle cladding across the upper storey and silicone-based render through the ground floor, suggestive of the traditional tile overhangs of old Totnes. Composition of the interior spaces has been carefully considered for the south-west facing position, maximising the excellent views across the rolling Devonshire countryside and Dartmoor beyond. Full-height glazing across the ground floor and first floor ensure an excellent quality of natural light throughout the course of the day.

Living spaces offer great versatility in their layout, loosely apportioned across a lateral plan over the ground level and designed for sociable cooking, eating and relaxation. The primary living area is a beautifully light open-plan room, with sliding glass doors opening this entire section onto the front terrace and gardens. A colourful bespoke kitchen sits opposite the dining area, with appliances built into a central island.

The living room, divided by a free standing bookcase, is brightly illuminated by a large skylight, strategically placed to draw excellent light through the impressive double-height volume of the central plan. Full-height glazing frames views across the gardens, ensuring constant visual communication between the indoor and outdoor spaces.

The westerly wing of the ground floor includes further flexible living space, which could be used as a two-bedroom guest annexe, with an independent bathroom and views to the garden. A utility room with direct access to the garden is also located in this part of the house.



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An attractive open-tread timber staircase rises to the upper storey, where the four double bedrooms and family bathroom unfold. The main bedroom has an en suite bathroom and an inviting south-facing terrace, the perfect position to enjoy the far-reaching views and spectacular sunsets.

Outdoor Space

Front and rear gardens offer plenty of space for relaxing and entertaining, capturing great warmth and sunlight over the course of the day. Completely enclosed by lines of mature hedging, the rear gardens feel very private. A large outdoor storeroom is positioned to one side of the house, a useful space for garden furniture and surfboards. Expansive lawns are bordered by raised beds and a greenhouse, with scope for home grown vegetables and flowers. The sloped front gardens provide additional private space for relaxing and enjoying the spectacular views, with the first floor overhang providing shade and shelter to the recessed terrace throughout the seasons.

The Area

Totnes is a medieval market town on the River Dart estuary. With its rich history, thriving cultural scene and wonderful natural surroundings, it is one of the most popular towns in the south-west. It has a broad range of independent shops, cafés, pubs and restaurants, notably The Hairy Barista, Greenfibres and The Bull Inn. The town is renowned for its charming Friday market that sells local produce, vintage clothing and antiques. Nearby Dartington Trust is set within a beautiful 1,200-acre campus and presents a series of arts and cultural events throughout the year.

The town lies within the South Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which offers an array of popular walking and cycling routes. There are also stunning beaches along the coastline 10 miles to the south. Brixham, Blackpool Sands and Salcombe are all easily accessible. Just 30 minutes' drive away, Dartmouth is a popular boating centre which hosts a world-famous regatta. Steeped in history and known for its naval college, there are narrow streets and cobbled lanes with an abundance of chic boutiques and galleries, as well as several well-regarded independent restaurants, delicatessens, pubs and cafés.

Torquay is less than a 20-minute drive to the west. It has a broad selection of supermarkets, independent shops and cafés and is home to Splashdown Quaywest waterpark and Kents Cavern Prehistoric Caves, both popular family activities.

There are some excellent schools in the surrounding area, including The Grove School, Torquay Boys' Grammar and Torquay Girls' Grammar Schools and Churston Ferrers Grammar School Academy.

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Totnes mainline rail station is only a five-minute drive away and runs direct services to London Paddington in under three hours and to Exeter or Plymouth in 30 minutes. With easy access to A303 and M5, Exeter is reachable in 40 minutes by car and London in four hours.

Council Tax Band: D

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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”.