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Croft Residential

**York ‘Georgian gem’ up for sale as restored family home for first time in 150 years**

One of North Yorkshire’s finest Georgian country mansions has been put on the market with an asking price of £2.95m after being restored to its full former splendour. Divided into two separate houses in the 1950s, a meticulous, long running 18-year restoration project has seen the building returned to its 19th century glory.

The house has not been offered for sale as a single fully restored residence since 1867, when it was bought by the Battye family, who owned the house until it was divided in the 1950s.

Skelton Hall, which is just three miles from York city centre, was originally constructed around 1820. The 12-bedroomed mansion is surrounded by formal gardens designed and laid out by John Meikle, a student of Capability Brown, with trademark sweeping lawns and a lake with its own island.

The lengthy restoration project that has transformed the house was sparked by its requisition by the RAF during the Second World War. After the RAF vacated the property, Skelton Hall was divided into two separate houses and it was not until 1997, when the individual owners of both wings decided independently to put their houses on the market, that the lengthy process of returning the hall to single ownership and full restoration could begin.
“We first saw the house in 1997 when it was still separated into two properties,” said Carl Mellor, the current owner of Skelton Hall. “It wasn’t something that we felt equipped to take on at that point and by the time we bought the hall in 2001 the structural work, basically unpicking the changes that had been made in the 1950s to create two properties, had got underway.”

With the house returned to a single property, Carl, his wife, Julie and their three children moved in, to take on a full-scale restoration process that would become part of their lives for the next 14 years. Virtually every one of the house’s 33 rooms have been totally renovated, with original features nurtured and restored and modern conveniences artfully incorporated.

“It’s been a huge project,” admitted Mr Mellor. “The house has 12 bedrooms, 11 fireplaces and lots and lots of chimneys, so you can imagine the scale of the task! We have had many interesting episodes along the way, including the Sky TV installer not having a drill long enough to get through the 3 ft walls, and waking up one morning to find a dozen grey lag geese had arrived on the lawn. But it has been incredibly satisfying to see this wonderful house returned to what it was originally intended to be - a Georgian mansion on a grand scale, set in exceptional gardens. We have come to the end of the restoration project now and having recreated the hall as a beautiful comfortable place to live, where we have had the most wonderful 14 years as a family, and which has provided an amazing backdrop to numerous parties and lovely family Christmases, we feel it’s time to downsize.”

The Mellors are planning to leave their Georgian mansion - whose perfectly preserved 19th century gardens feature numerous remarkable plants and trees, including four towering wellingtonia (or giant redwood) trees that are thought to date back to the construction of the house 200 years ago – and start a new era of their lives.

“We will miss this very special house very much but feel that we have been good custodians of Skelton Hall. It’s time to hand that role over to someone else who will love and cherish the place as much as we have,” added Mr Mellor.

Skelton Hall is for sale with York property agents Croft Residential and Blenkin & Co, which specialise in exclusive properties in Yorkshire and across the North of England.
“The house is a magnificent Georgian gem,” said Toby Cockcroft director of Croft Residential. “The comprehensive renovation programme has produced stunning results; but add to that its location, in superb countryside, yet just a stone’s throw from York Minster, and this has to be one of the finest period properties on the market. We are certainly expecting high levels of interest from prospective buyers.”