



HISTORY STILL IN THE MAKING

The Kent Thameside office of leading southeast chartered surveyors Caxtons, is delighted to be the managing agents for Malling House in West Malling, which in recent years has been converted into attractive office suites offering a mix of open plan and partitioned offices with ample parking at the rear.



Associate Director Sarah Potter said: "I am very pleased to be involved with this historic property, which was built in 1710 when Queen Anne, the last of the Stuart line, was on the throne. The property has seen many incarnations since then and it has undergone changes that have extended and altered it.

However, its original proportions are still visible today. The windows and offset door – a popular feature of the period – would still be recognisable by its former residents, and the marbled floor in the ground floor entrance of the property still exists."



'Malling House was originally known as Lantern House, believed to be so called because, in the days before street lighting, an early occupant of the house was said to have hung a large lantern outside the front door to light the road for the horse drawn coaches that travelled along the treacherous road surface.



During the Victorian period one of the house's occupants contracted an architect to redesign and update the front of the property to provide a more 'fashionable style' which included rendered facades that covered the original red brick facings. Large two and three storey extensions and a tower were added, as was a new staircase and a porch decorated with a ball-topped balustrade (reduced in size during the 1950s). A perimeter wall mimicking the ball-topped balustrade was added to the front of the property thereby separating it from the road.

The house was home to a variety of early inhabitants and by 1861 Mr Charles Phillips, a widower, lived there with his four daughters and five servants. Ten years later the huntsman, property owner and magistrate – and the most well known resident of Malling House - the Hon Ralph Pelham Nevill and his wife Louisa were living in the property with their young son Ralph. After they vacated the property was occupied by Ralph Nevill's spinster sister, who was waited on by eight servants.

In addition, Malling House was used as a Red Cross Hospital during the 1914-1918 War; during the Second World War the Land Army occupied it (when it was



known for its lively parties) and after they moved out it was used as offices for Reed Publishing, and as a girls' reform school. The school closed in the early 1970s because the building was deemed unsafe.

The house has, over the years, undergone a number of major renovations during which most of the original internal features were changed or lost and principal rooms were sub divided with original staircases removed and new ones installed. Many of the changes made during the Victorian period were removed and the whole of the interior has, over time, been gutted.

Sarah concludes: "Malling House has undergone dramatic changes during its 300 years but has latterly been restored and renovated and sympathetically bordered by a new wall complete with steel balustrade and railings modelled on the features of the original wall. The house now provides extraordinary office premises for two companies - Carillion and Aston Scott – and its long history is still in the making. I love the magnificence of the building which, for all that it has been through over the centuries, still retains a regal poise and presence on the landscape."

Caxtons Commercial agency department are currently marketing two office suites on the 2nd and 3rd floors from 840 sq ft to 2745 sq ft. More information may be obtained from James Roberts or Raymond Amosso in the Commercial Agency division on 01474 567666.

Caxtons, voted the most active Regional Agent in Kent for 2008, is one of the largest independent property practices in the South East and has offices throughout Kent and Sussex offering a full range of property consultancy and management services in the commercial and residential sectors.



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Note:

¹Information adapted from a Brief History of Mallings House, Town Hill, West Mallings, Kent.

Chartered Surveyors, Caxtons, offer a full range of property consultancy and manage some 7000 commercial and residential properties throughout Kent and the South East. Commercial properties in their portfolio include shopping centres, industrial estates and offices, and clients include Kent-based Pfizer and Shepherd Neame. Their residential divisions manage all types of residential property including block management as well as student-lets in the Kent University towns of Chatham and Canterbury.