

Why party barns aren't the preserve of the young



A party barn has long been an aspirational addition to a property for families and the young. A place that larger gatherings can take place away from the primary accommodation, a large space that allows for parties and gatherings and can be set up on a temporary basis in a way that suits the specific occasion. Trestle tables for a sit-down lunch or dinner; a dance floor; somewhere to party while keeping the inevitable chaos at arm's length.

Eighteen months of Covid restrictions has given everybody a thirst for social interaction. Cognatum has found there is a greater appetite amongst the residents of their retirement estates to bring together family and friends.

Richard Williams of Cognatum says, *"We have several estates with wonderful communal spaces that suit a wide range of residents' social requirements. Historically we were probably thinking more pilates classes and bridge evenings than parties, but times move on. These spaces are made for social gatherings. Residents are welcome to arrange a gathering between themselves, or to book the space for their own party for friends and family."*

"Downsizing in later life makes sense on so many levels. Our advice is always to reduce the number of bedrooms but to maintain sufficient living space to entertain friends and family. But there will obviously be a limit to the number of people who can be squeezed in when the occasion demands."

"A retirement estate can offer wonderful potential for celebratory occasions. Communal gardens are a great option with tables under the shade of a large tree or the addition of gazebos or a marquee where space permits. But party plans can really develop where a dedicated indoor communal space exists."

Properties for sale on Cognatum retirement estates with party barns:

Church Place in Ickenham has a beautiful restored timbered barn in the grounds that is perfect for social events and is a pretty day or night venue. Cottages and apartments are set around two charming garden courtyards. Currently available for sale is an end terrace cottage with two bedrooms. Guide price: £725,000

Cognatum's new development, Orchard Yard in the historic village of Wingham, is a small development of 15 contemporary two-bedroom apartments and three-bedroom houses built in the original farmyard of the 15th century manor house Wingham Court. There's a large single storey communal building with its own kitchen and bifold doors opening out onto a barbecue terrace and firepit. Usually set up with comfy sofas, chairs and coffee tables, it can be transformed into a wonderful party space for as many as fifty people with great ease. Prices start at £560,000.

St Peter's Close on the edge of the village of Goodworth Clatford is a development of twenty brick and flint cottages and apartments surrounding two courtyards, with the centrepiece a Listed timber-framed barn, open on one side, that brings rural elegance and a pretty party venue. Currently available for sale is a spacious three-bedroom cottage with front and rear gardens and a garage. Guide price: £465,000.

Cognatum, an independent not for profit company, has 60 retirement estates across central and southern England. All are in prime locations within vibrant market towns or villages, within walking distance of shops and restaurants. Each estate benefits from thoughtful architecture, landscaped grounds, and a dedicated estate manager.

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