

Kirkham House



This well-preserved late medieval house, built of local stone, lies near the centre of the Devon town of Paignton. It probably belonged to a well-to-do landowning or merchant family, and had a grand hall with space for up to 20 people to dine together.

The house now contains modern furniture, illustrating traditional craftsmanship and the original use of the rooms.





Although it was once known as the Priest's House, it is more likely to have been the house of a well-to-do landowning or merchant family: the detailing inside the house suggests that it belonged to someone of high status.

There are no documents to tell us exactly when or by whom it was built. The carving on the woodwork suggests a 14th-century date, but the layout of the house is more typical of the 15th century.

- Traditional three-room plan found in rural farmhouses of this date.
- A number of examples of modern furniture are displayed in the house, to illustrate traditional English timber and joinery techniques.
- Today Kirkham House stands in a crowded back street opposite new housing of starkly contrasting character. From outside it is hard to imagine it as it once was, probably rendered and limewashed, and surrounded by buildings of a similar nature. Step inside the house, however, and it is possible to forget some of the 21st-century bustle.

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