

Is this Britain's weirdest garden? It's 30ft wide and three-quarters of a mile long... and yours for £340,000

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A stroll to the end of the garden does not normally require too much exertion.

Unless, that is, you own what could be the most unusual cottage garden in Britain – a mere 30ft wide but stretching for three-quarters of a mile.

The North Yorkshire plot, along with the two-bedroom house that sits at one end of it, is now on the market for £340,000.

Now scroll down to see the video



So long: Barbara and Ian Topham will soon be leaving their rather peculiar plot - their house is up for sale

But the new owner of The Gables at Alne, 11 miles from York, will need to be prepared for more than a little gentle weeding.

It takes a good half-hour to walk to the end of the garden and back, and the hedge that runs all the way down one side of it is in need of constant trimming.

The garden was created from a disused railway line and property experts say they have never come across such a long, thin plot.



Though the Tophams' house is fairly modest, their garden is very far from it

Estate agent Barry Dinner, who is handling the sale, said: 'I've been doing this for 28 years and this is the longest back garden I have ever seen. It must be one of the longest in the country.'

Mail on Sunday gardening writer Martyn Cox added: 'You wouldn't want to get to the other end and realise that you had forgotten your secateurs.'

The current owner is ex-postmaster Ian Topham, 73, who retired to the former railway worker's cottage with his 71-year-old wife Barbara nine years ago after spotting its potential.

Mr Topham, a former mayor of nearby Boroughbridge, has transformed the elongated plot of land that a previous owner had used to grow trees.



Memory line: The Tophams' garden was originally a private railway

He said the garden was once the route of a privately owned railway that was removed in the Fifties, and that the house was originally occupied by a gatekeeper who operated a level crossing.

Mr Topham added: 'The track ran from nearby Easingwold, went through Alne and joined the main London-to-Edinburgh East Coast line a few miles away. But the tracks were taken up after the Second World War and soil was put down.'

Mr Topham's garden is divided into a number of distinctive areas, beginning with a patio, pond and barbecue area behind the house, surrounded by flower borders.





Two proud owners: The Tophams have transformed their garden since buying the house nine years ago

Beyond it is a 12ft greenhouse used for growing seedlings, tomatoes and cucumbers, while an enormous 40ft structure further down is for tomatoes and year-round baby carrots and turnips.

A recently planted rose garden with pergolas comes next, followed by a 70ft-long Nissen hut that Mr Topham used as a workshop.

Further down are two paddocks and an old railway goods carriage once used as a goat shelter. Finally, there is what Mr Topham calls a wildlife area with trees, daffodils, snowdrops, other wild flowers and a stream.



The garden features vegetables, a rose garden, two paddocks and a wildlife area

Mr Topham is reluctantly selling up after suffering a stroke last September.

He said: 'There is a lot of mowing involved. And the hedge is three-quarters of a mile long.

'It is like painting the Forth Bridge – once you've finished, you need to start again.'



Extra-long: Although this Yorkshire garden is only 30ft wide, it is three quarters of a mile long, as this aerial shot reveals

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My dogs would love it !! But....dream on !!

- JOHN HUGHES, ELCHE SPAIN, 26/7/2011 06:08

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Lovely, if only I had the money!

- Liz Ward, Huddersfield UK, 26/7/2011 00:15

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ITS AN AIRSTRIP.

- MARGARET ADAMS, SIDCUP KENT, 25/7/2011 23:11

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Whats with all the dreadful photo shop work on the "aerial view" ?? All the fields either side have been manipulated... badly!! even i can do better than that and i hardly ever use paintshop pro! If it is "knitted" images, it does not need that amount of butchering, makes it look horrific. Historically it is a shame that the tracks were removed, it would have been neat to make them a feature of the "garden" i would have laid a path of local or beautiful stones between the tracks all the way down making one long path.

- Fiona, UK, 25/7/2011 22:47

Click to rate Rating 7

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My garden is the same but its about half a mile long

- Shaunie, Alderholt, Hampshire, 25/7/2011 22:29

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Puts a whole new slant on "won't be long darling, just going down the bottom of the garden"!

- David, Clitheroe, UK, 25/7/2011 22:04

Click to rate Rating 39

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