

# Don't move, improve

MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR HOME'S POTENTIAL

HOW TO GET  
**Planning  
permission**

YOUR  
GUIDE TO  
**EXTENDING**

**10**

WAYS TO  
IMPROVE YOUR  
HOME, INSIDE  
AND OUT

**BEFORE  
+ AFTER**

**30** pages of  
amazing  
transformations

**EXPERT ADVICE**  
How to  
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renovations

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# WELCOME



Every spring, my thoughts always turn to ways that I can improve my home. Will I keep it simple and just repaint the rooms, or will I finally extend the kitchen to give myself the perfect space for

baking in? Last year, it was the garden that got the makeover.

This year, I have just bought a house where the kitchen and bathroom clearly haven't been touched in the last 40 years. My mind is full of the possibilities for what I can do – a kitchen-diner with bi-folds is a definite, as is ripping out the old blue bathroom. This supplement is full of useful advice and inspiration, whether you hope to create a dream kitchen or a bathroom with spa-like style. The guides to extending and planning permission can help with knowing what is possible and what is permitted, while the experts' Q&As offer valuable insight into managing a project, and who to hire to do the work. For more ideas and advice, go to [realhomes.co.uk](http://realhomes.co.uk). Happy renovating!



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# 10 WAYS TO TRANSFORM YOUR HOME



If you need more space, a larger kitchen or nicer bathroom, but don't want to move, discover the potential in your own home

## CONVERT YOUR LOFT

Are you wasting your roof space by just using it for storage? Now is the time to realise its potential to add an extra room, or even rooms, to your home.

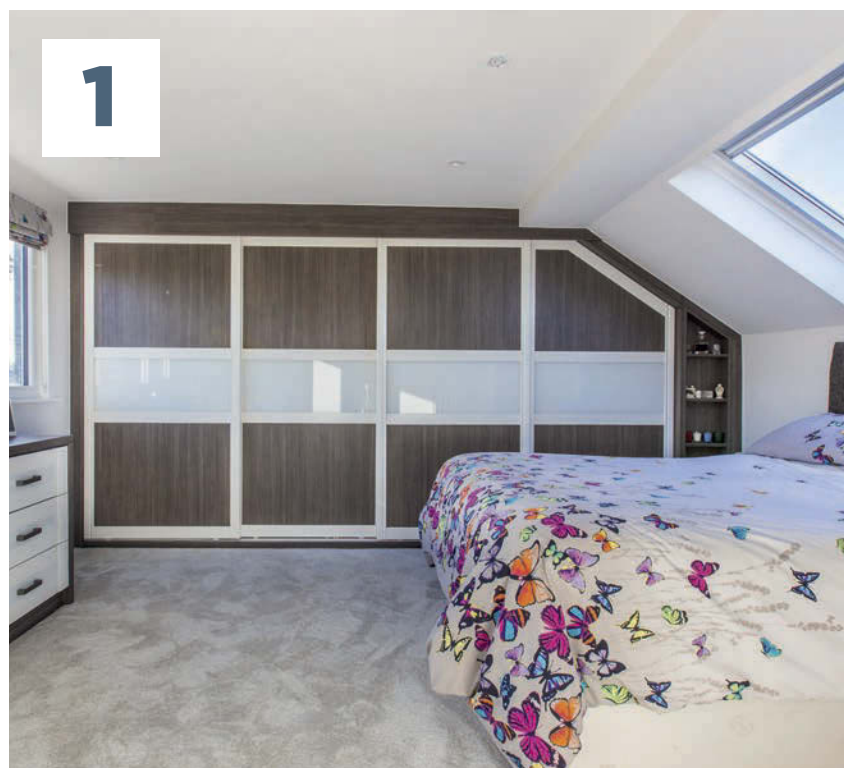
'Most properties will be suitable for a loft conversion so long as the loft measures 2.3 metres at the highest point,' says Becke Livesey, director at Econoloft. 'While new master bedroom suites remain the most popular option, we're also providing more conversions for entertainment or games rooms.'

When the Horton family needed office space and an extra bedroom in their three-bedroom house in St Helens, Liverpool, they knew the answer lay above.

Econoloft turned the loft into a new master bedroom (right) with hotel-style en suite, so the old bedroom can be used as an office/guest bedroom. The conversion cost £28,000, but Sonya Horton says she is confident that money has been recouped through the value it has added to the house. 'If we had purchased a four-bedroom house in this area, it would have cost an additional £100,000, so buying and then improving has made much more financial sense.'

**COSTS:** Expect to pay from £26,000 for a dormer-roof conversion and from £18,000 for a more basic conversion with Velux rooflights.

WORDS ALISON JONES







## ADD A MODERN CONSERVATORY

Conservatories are often dubbed ‘the third living space’, after the living room and dining room.

Advances in design, glazing and thermal performance mean they can now be used comfortably all year round, instead of being too cold in winter and too hot in summer. They also act as a link between the home and the garden – which can be another underused resource.

Traditional conservatories often come with brick bases, which can cut off part of the view. For this project (above right) in Newick, Sussex, homeowners Martin and Sue Pollins selected full-height bi-fold doors from Origin for a more seamless link.

‘The large glass expanses of the bi-folds and the modern architecture, created the chic, contemporary look we wanted,’ says Sue.

The design included one three-door and one five-door set of bi-folds, which can be concertinaed back to fully open up the space. Made of powder-coated aluminium, the hard-wearing finish is resistant to scratches and colour-fade.

An eight-point multi-point locking system means the new garden room is completely secure.

‘We find ourselves sitting out here come rain or shine,’ says Martin. ‘With the doors folded back it feels as if you’re out in the garden, but with the comfort of being indoors.’

**COSTS:** A five-door set of bi-folds from Origin costs from £6,000, not including fitting.

## UPDATE YOUR BATHROOM

‘There are many benefits to be gained from upgrading your bathroom,’ says Rob Tyson, interiors expert at Victorian Plumbing. ‘A new suite or furnishings can genuinely transform the space. A heated towel rail, for example, will provide the room with heat output but will also keep your towels toasty.’

‘Other useful upgrades include lever-handle taps, which are much smoother to operate than crosshead handle designs.’

‘Soft closing toilet seats are also popular right now because they avoid the noisy slamming that can sometimes occur with regular seats.’

‘Grey bathrooms are currently bang on trend. They are instantly sophisticated with an understated vibe; this serves to make them future-proof against fleeting fashions in interiors – perfect if you decide to sell in a few years.’

‘The Brooklyn suite (right) is a great choice for anyone looking to upgrade their bathroom because it has space-saving features, like the



integrated vanity unit and larger, L-shaped shower bath. However, the real standout feature is the overall grey colour scheme.’

**COSTS:** This Brooklyn Grey Avola bathroom suite with L-shaped bath is £499.94. The matching grey mirrored cabinet is £195.95, both from Victorian Plumbing.





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## TURN UNUSED AREAS INTO A HOME OFFICE

'We are seeing a move towards multipurpose living, where a home office coexists within either a living room or bedroom,' says Helen Reeks, group creative development director for Neville Johnson. 'People want to incorporate their working life into their home life with more flexibility

'The most neglected areas of the home – the attic, under the stairs, wide landings – can be perfect places for offices. It's essential to create a practical space that caters for technology, such as drawers for printers and scanners, as well as shelving for stationary.

'And you can never light a room as efficiently as the sun can, so think of electric light as a way to create the perfect creative atmosphere, instead.'

**COSTS:** Storage concepts start from £3,000 at Neville Johnson.

## EXTEND OR REMODEL YOUR KITCHEN

'If you have the luxury of space to extend your kitchen, this really opens up the design possibilities available to you,' says Victoria Hudson, designer at Second Nature specialist C&C Kitchens of Enfield. 'It's very much about planning the extended space to suit your lifestyle, and ensuring the whole area flows.

'Do you want stools around a peninsular or island, as well as space for a table and chairs? Or would you prefer a place for chilling out with comfy sofas and a media centre?'

It's also worth thinking about relocating the space to a different room if it would work better. If a larger kitchen is to become the key living space in your home, moving it into the lounge or an unused integral garage and then extending may be the answer. Whichever option appeals, look into planning constraints in your local area to see what is likely to be approved.'

**COSTS:** This kitchen is fitted with units from Second Nature's Broadoak Shaker range. It cost £22,000, designed by Victoria.



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## CULTIVATE YOUR OUTSIDE SPACE

‘A well-planned and maintained garden can actually add to the value of your home by a healthy margin, and provide additional useful living space in the warmer months,’ says award-winning garden designer Paul Hervey-Brookes.

‘Invest in a mixture of good-value shrubs that will flower, fruit or have interesting autumn foliage, and use with a mix of flowering herbaceous perennials that will come back year after year.

‘When it comes to hard landscaping, take hints on what will look best from your home. If you live in a red brick house, for example, go for dark greys or earthy tones to create contrast, and steer away from buff or limestone.

‘If your budget allows, a garden designer will help you to envisage the space in a whole new way.’

**COSTS:** Expect to pay from £250 to £750 for a day’s consultancy from a garden designer.



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## TRANSFORM YOUR STAIRCASE

‘The staircase is the largest piece of furniture in every home,’ says Adam Taylor of First Step Designs. ‘Instead of just using it as a means of getting up and down, see it as an opportunity to make a design statement.’

‘Eighty per cent of the time, the staircase in your home will have been placed in the best location. However, builders are likely to have installed the most modestly-priced option. There are so many ways you can personalise a staircase so that it complements your décor.’

The main consideration when it comes to redesigning a staircase in the current market is to make spaces lighter and appear larger, using glass and open-plan stairs.

A complete replacement can usually be installed in two to three days, or tired old staircases can be renovated with new treads or balustrades in around a day.

**COSTS:** Staircase renovations range from £3,000 to £6,000 at First Step Designs. Replacements start around £8,000. Specialized staircases, such as Band (shown left), cost from £20,000 up to around £30,000.

## CREATE BETTER BEDROOM STORAGE

If creating extra storage in your bedrooms is top of your 2017 to-do list, then you need to consider how to utilise the space that you have more effectively.

‘Great ways to tidy away clutter include – overbed storage, which is perfect for small spaces or children’s bedrooms; top boxes that use the often wasted space at the top of the wardrobe; corner wardrobes that can turn dead space into practical hanging space; slide-out shoe racks for shoe lovers; and counterbalance hanging rails that make the most of every inch of space,’ says Lydia Fahy, digital marketing executive for Hammonds.

‘At the moment, people love shaker-style doors for wardrobes, especially in muted tones, such as Rural Oak, White or Ash White,’ adds Lydia. ‘They bring a calmness and natural style to the bedroom.’

**COSTS:** Pictured right is the Seton range in White Ash. Bedrooms start from £3,000, Hammonds.

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### CONVERT THE GARAGE

Too often, garages aren't used for their original purpose of parking vehicles in, but instead become somewhere to hide away clutter. But turning yours into living space, could add as much as 10 per cent to the value of your home.

'Using a garage to add to your floor space avoids using up your garden for an extension, and allows you to keep building work to a minimum,' says Stuart Letts, of Garage Conversion Specialists.

'Most garages tend to be long and narrow. For this reason, it's common for people to break the new living space into two smaller rooms using stud walls. Where a garage adjoins a kitchen, knocking out the wall between the two in order to create one larger kitchen-diner is another good option.'

Popular uses for converted garages include home cinemas, gyms and ground-floor bedrooms. Detached garages could be turned into annexes, but this may be subject to planning permission.

**COSTS:** This project, by Garage Conversion Specialists, cost £17,600.



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### GIVE YOUR DRIVEWAY A NEW LOOK

'Your drive is the first thing people see when approaching your home, so it needs to provide a statement and be welcoming for guests,' says Andrew Gill, marketing manager at Brett Landscaping. 'When designing a new look, consider the style that best fits your home. You might want a contemporary feel to match a modern house, or to create a deliberate contrast with an older one.'

'Always make sure you choose blocks strong enough for the vehicles that will be using it, and, as flooding is an increasing issue, consider permeable paving so that your drive can deal with rainwater more effectively.'

'With driveway design, installation costs typically account for 80 per cent of your total landscaping budget. It therefore pays to get what you really want as a premium product will only marginally increase your total outlay.'

**COSTS:** Installation of block paving can cost from £75m<sup>2</sup>. Prices vary depending on the region, design, type and availability of materials, site conditions, and size of drive. 

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# Introducing Origin...

Origin is the UK's leading manufacturer of aluminium architectural solutions.

Now award-winning and operating internationally, Origin began in 2001 as a family business dedicated to the design, creation and manufacture of the UK's best quality doors, backed by uncompromising levels of service.

Cousins, Neil Ginger and Victoria Brocklesby, have since worked relentlessly to perfect the design and functionality of bi-folding doors, and to create and maintain the highly respected reputation for quality and service that they have today. Because of this success, Origin have expanded the range to include residential doors, windows and blinds.

As the business has continued to grow and diversify, the foundations of family ethos, pride and ownership in all stages of production firmly remain.



For your nearest showroom, please call **0808 231 1185**, email **[info@origin-global.com](mailto:info@origin-global.com)** or visit **[origin-global.com/RH](http://origin-global.com/RH)**







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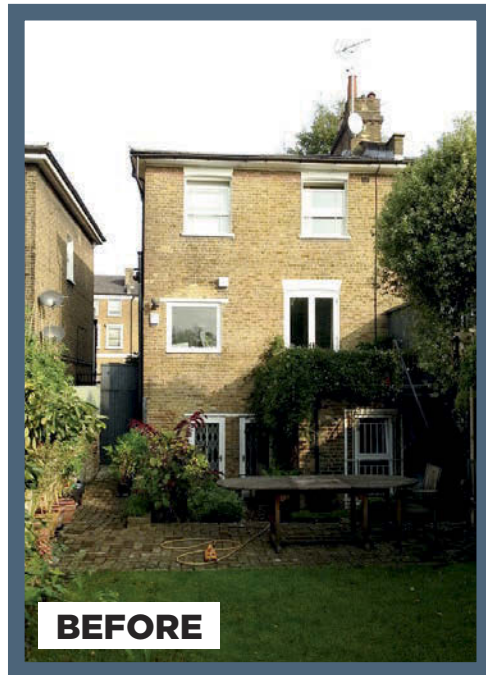


#### DOUBLE ADDITION

Full-width extensions on two floors have created more space and better links to the new terrace and garden



DON'T MOVE, IMPROVE



**BEFORE**

**NARROW VIEW**

**Above** The tall house felt disconnected from the garden, and the lower floor was underused

## MULTI-LEVEL EXTENSION TO A PERIOD HOME

James and Rose Jeffries' ambitious plans to extend their Victorian house demanded an exceptional design from their architect ►

**THE OWNERS**

James & Rose Jeffries, who are in investment banking, live here with their children, Edward, 12, and Lucy, 14

**THE PROPERTY**

A five-bedroom Victorian semi-detached house in Shepherd's Bush, London

**TOTAL PROJECT COST**

£560,000











#### KITCHEN-DINER

The extended kitchen is a now a pleasant place for the family to enjoy, with a lovely view of the garden. Artisan range kitchen units, John Lewis of Hungerford. British Tectonic Oak flooring, Chaunceys. Secto Octo pendant lights, Skandium ►







**W**hen James and Rose and their two children moved into this elegant semi-detached house in Shepherd's Bush, London, in 2011, they had no plans to extend, even though there was permission in place to do so. The previous owners were architects and the property had been updated relatively recently, when it was converted back from two flats into one house. However, after living there for a few years, James and Rose realised some spaces weren't working for them.

'The eat-in kitchen was too small and it was impossible to entertain in,' says Rose. 'The lower-ground floor was under-utilised, and the master bedroom wasn't to our liking.' The plans that had been in place when they bought the house wouldn't have given Rose and James everything they wanted – which included an improved family area with a connection to the garden, a nice master bedroom suite, and a new guest room, study and utility.

Their ambitions for the Victorian house posed some problems, not least because it is in a Conservation Area. Local planning policies wouldn't normally permit a full-width extension across two levels, due to the potential loss of light and privacy for neighbours. And the style of any extension would need to be traditional – unless the quality of the design was deemed 'exceptional'.

Architect Alex Tart, a family friend, did indeed do an exceptional job, designing a two-storey extension that doesn't impact negatively on neighbouring homes, and is modern, yet in harmony with the period house.

'The importance of employing a good architect to be involved at each stage of the project shouldn't

be underestimated,' Rose stresses. 'Alex ensured that all our initial aims were realised in full.'

There is now a half-sunken lower-ground floor extension with access to a patio area and steps up to the garden beyond. Permission was also granted for an addition to the upper-ground floor to run across the full width of the house – a rare triumph given the area's planning policy. However, it doesn't extend out as far as the floor below, making it possible to create a balcony terrace with unobtrusive glass balustrades and an external staircase down to the garden.

The new extensions gave the family the chance to rethink their living and sleeping arrangements. James and Rose's redesigned master bedroom and en suite, and the study have been moved to the lower-ground floor, connecting directly to the garden via glass doors. Edward and Lucy's bedrooms are on the first floor.

Benefitting from the most generous ceiling heights and best views of the garden, the upper-ground floor was the obvious space for the main living area and kitchen to be.

New shaker-style kitchen units from John Lewis of Hungerford's Artisan range have been fitted, topped with hardwearing granite work surfaces. A new roof light was installed, while British Tectonic oak was laid on the floor.

Work started on the project at the beginning of 2015 and took 11 months to complete. In spite of the scale of the transformation, everything ran relatively smoothly.

'There was a short delay getting a decent match to the existing bricks,' recalls Rose. 'Some unplanned damp-proofing had to be done, and the builders spent time recreating the original hallway, which meant we ended up exceeding our budget.'

When they commissioned Alex to design the extensions, Rose and James wanted a blend of traditional, period rooms and modern living areas, with original features still prevailing. They are delighted at how successfully Alex has realised their vision. 'It's completely changed the way we live and interact as a family,' says Rose. 'It still feels like a period house, but is much better suited to modern life. There's so much light and space.'

#### WORK SPACE

**Above left** The generous island features granite worktops, from John Lewis of Hungerford. **Bar stools**, Phil Crennell. **Cooker**, Rangemaster. Oak blue blend wood-effect tiles (above cooker), Mandarin Stone

#### GARDEN OUTLOOK

**Left** New glazing leads out to a balcony terrace. Aluminium windows, Finline. Flushglaze rooflight, Glazing Vision. **Dining table**, Ikea. Artisan chairs and antiques, from France. **Artwork**, from a gallery in Franschoek, South Africa



#### THE COSTS AND CONTACTS

Fixtures, fittings and joinery <b>£84,883</b>	Basement and substructure <b>£38,632</b>
Finishes <b>£66,129</b>	External works <b>£32,000</b>
External walls, roof and frame <b>£60,851</b>	Demolitions and alterations <b>£24,621</b>
Doors and windows <b>£56,452</b>	Upper floors and stairs <b>£10,085</b>
Preliminaries <b>£50,964</b>	Internal walls and partitions <b>£2,001</b>
Contingency <b>£48,834</b>	Professional fees <b>£85,000</b>
Plumbing and electrical installation <b>£47,407</b>	<b>TOTAL (incl VAT)</b> <b>£779,950</b>
Kitchen and appliances <b>£42,100</b>	<b>Architects</b> Alex Tart Architects, 020 8780 2830, alexarchitects.com
	<b>Builders</b> Findwillow, 01474 708106, findwillow.co.uk





# Introducing the Origin Bi-fold Door...

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Bi-fold Door





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Blinds



# MICHAEL HOLMES' GUIDE TO EXTENDING YOUR HOME

The expert renovator explains how to create the space you need without having to relocate



## Q What are the main types of extension I should consider?

**A** If you need more room, first I'd recommend looking at ways you can make better use of the space you already have. For instance, you could reuse an old airing cupboard, take advantage of a large landing, or subdivide a big bedroom, all of which are cheaper than extending. If these aren't possible, I'd suggest looking at converting existing spaces, such as the loft, garage or cellar. Only then would I think about an extension. The cheapest way to extend, and the one that won't sacrifice garden space, is to add an extra storey to an existing single-storey structure, such as a garage. If that's not viable, look at building out to the rear or side. A two-storey extension is really the best value as the significant outlay on the foundations and roof creates more living space than in a single-storey extension. In high density areas, you can always add a basement.

## Q What's the best way to minimise disruption during the build?

**A** If you're knocking through from a loft conversion or extension, then it's worth moving out, at least for that short period, as it will be incredibly noisy and messy. During the rest of the project, it's often perfectly feasible for you to be there. The key to survival is making sure there's separation – the builders need to know where they can park, they need welfare facilities, such as a Portaloos, and they need somewhere to have breaks.



## Q How can I make an extension work with the rest of my property?

**A** If you are going to extend, it's really important that the new addition complements the rest of your property. There are many different styles to consider, but the most obvious is a seamless extension that looks like it was built as part of the original house. When done well, seamless extensions look absolutely fantastic; however, they're very difficult to get right, as you need to match old and new materials together. The easier option is to extend in a slightly different style – this could be a contrasting period or contemporary design. It might not seem appropriate to add a modern addition to a listed or character building, but often conservation officers actually like to see the contrast between old and new.

PHOTOGRAPH DARREN CHUNG



## Q Is it usually best to remodel an existing extension or demolish it and start again?

**A** Unless a building is protected or has intrinsic architectural value, it is usually easiest to knock it down and start again. That said, lots of older buildings have great character and I don't

like to suggest people knock them down just for the sake of it. If you have an extension that is characterless, such as many post-war additions, which were austere and poorly insulated, then it's definitely the best option to knock it down, especially if it's going to need expensive underpinning. If you've got something with character and quality, then it's worth renovating it.

### EXTRA SPACE

**Below** Extending to the rear and side turned a once-cramped kitchen into a large, bright room

Find out what your extension will cost by visiting [realhomes.co.uk/extension-cost-calculator](http://realhomes.co.uk/extension-cost-calculator)



## Q What are my options for extending a listed home or one in a Conservation Area?

**A** People who live in listed buildings often assume there's nothing they can do to their houses, but that's not what a listing is all about, which is preserving what makes it special. It's really important to get a historic building or heritage specialist on board, who will understand what's important about your property and help you to preserve and enhance that. There's actually a lot you can do – the key is talking to your local authority and getting the necessary consent.

## Q Where can I find the right builder for my project?

**A** The key to a successful building project is the relationship between client and builder. You need to be a good client, and this is very much about the attitude you take – pay your builder on time, show them respect, and stick to your word. The best way to find a builder is by recommendation. The best builders never need to advertise; they work on word of mouth and live on their reputation. They're more likely to turn down work than accept it, so you'll need to plan well ahead. Be aware that there are different types of builders. There are big, efficient firms, who have lots of manpower and will be quick but expensive. Then there are your small, one-man-band companies who tend to be slower and less expensive but will take longer. You can't have it all. 🏠

## Q How will my finances influence what size extension I can have?

**A** One danger when extending your home is paying an architectural designer for a lovely set of plans, and then going to see a builder, only to find out that the lowest quote is much more than you've got to spend. The way to prevent this is to look at other people's build costs and what they've achieved – *Real Homes* publishes these for every project. Don't expect to achieve radically cheaper build costs than other people have; building work costs what it costs and there's no magic formula for cutting it other than DIY to reduce labour expenses. Establish your budget then divide this by the average build cost per square metre for your extension to get an idea of the size you can afford.

## Q How much should I budget for the work?

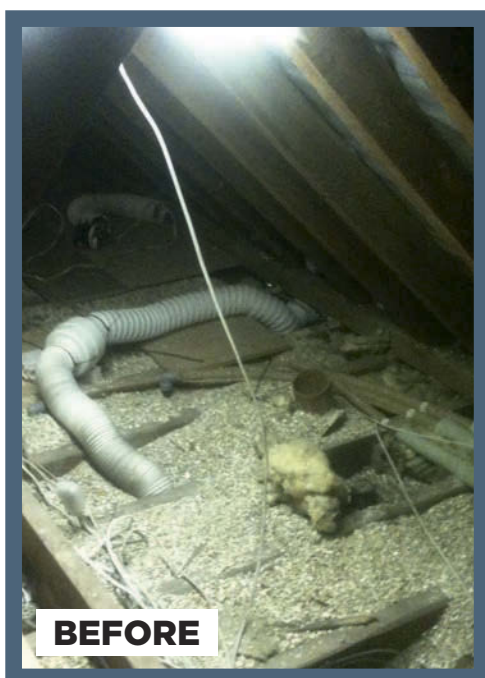
**A** Material costs are much the same wherever you live, although transportation costs increase if you are far away from where they're manufactured. It's labour costs that really vary, as they're related to supply, demand, and the cost of living. The most expensive place to build is London, and the further you go from bigger urban areas, the cheaper labour will be. Costs also vary according to build quality, complexity and form. A square extension over one or two storeys is the cheapest and most cost-effective option, as this provides the largest floor area for the lowest ratio of wall space. As a guide, for a loft conversion, expect to pay £1,150 to £1,450 per square metre, plus VAT, for the finished project.

If you're planning an extension, You'll need to allow around £1,500 per square metre for the building work — and, for higher specification finishes, up to £3,000 per square metre. If you're adding bi-fold or sliding doors, allow £1,400 to £1,800 per metre for these. Keep in mind that smaller extensions (under 15–20 square metres) can actually have higher costs per square metre. Clay or peat soil, lots of trees nearby or heavily sloping ground will increase your foundation costs.

The size of your extension will affect the fees for building regulations approval. Plan from £250 for one to 10 square metres, and from £900 for 80 to 100 square metres, whether you go for a Full Plans application with everything approved before you start, or a Building Notice application, where you need only give 48 hours' notice of commencement.

In England and Wales, if your project involves excavation or alterations on or near a neighbour's boundary, you are legally required to issue a Party Wall Notice. If your neighbours consent formally, you won't need a party wall settlement. If not having a surveyor arrange party wall agreements costs from £700 to £1,000 per neighbour.





**BEFORE**

#### NEW STOREY

**Above and right** Kate and Matthew converted what was once a dark, unused attic space to create a spacious master bedroom suite with living area and large wet room

## SPACIOUS LOFT CONVERSION

Kate and Matthew Ashwell turned the attic of their Victorian house into a light-filled master suite

**T**he great location and classic period features weren't the only things that appealed to Kate and Matthew when they first went to see this Victorian house; it was the loft space and pitch of the roof that really caught their eye. 'We were on the lookout for an old property with scope for a loft conversion,' says Kate. 'While other potential buyers might have been focusing on the size of the kitchen or condition of the bathroom suite, we were mentally measuring the roof height.'

This, coupled with the fact that the house still had the original windows (a must for Kate) and off-street parking, convinced them to buy it as a renovation project and future family home.



The couple were living in the area already but had been looking for more space. When they first moved in, back in 2009, they decided to concentrate on updating the bathroom and the overall decoration. They then turned the kitchen and dining room into one open-plan area. The loft project was constantly at the back of their minds, though, and Matthew did extensive research online to look at the possibilities.

The previous owners had already applied for planning permission for a loft conversion. Although it had expired, Kate and Matthew were confident their application would be approved, especially as the owners of other houses in the street had completed similar projects. 'We decided to invite eight companies to come





#### UNIQUE DESIGNS

The bespoke **bed** and **furniture** were hand-built by Leaves of London; the tall boy features a handy laundry store. The **walls** are painted in Farrow & Ball's Pavilion Grey. **French doors**, from Value Conservatories. Glass **balcony** and **balustrade**, both Total Glass Solutions. Grey **curtains**, Landers Interiors

up with designs and tender for the job, but we found many had limited vision and just didn't appreciate the high-specification finish that we wanted to achieve,' Kate explains.

The couple hired AI Lofts & Extensions for the project, which finally started in the summer of 2014 and took three months to complete. They asked Steve Mills, the founder of AI, to keep the roof pitch as high as possible, create lots of light and a contemporary feel. 'We knew we wanted one large, open space incorporating our bedroom, a walk-in wardrobe and a luxurious wet room,' says Kate. 'As the design progressed, we could see there was space for a living area, too.' The layout dictated that the staircase came up in to the middle of the room,

naturally dividing it into sleeping and living spaces. 'It wasn't viable to have the bed under the windows in the sloping roof at the front of the house,' says Kate. 'There wouldn't have been enough headroom, and we wanted to use the eaves space for storage.' Instead, the bed was placed in the middle of the room, with French doors and a glass balcony overlooking the garden. The aluminium doors were colour matched to blend in with the slate roof.

The long, narrow part of the L-shaped space at the rear of the house was turned into a walk-in wardrobe, leading on to a wet room. Built-in wardrobes either side provide plenty of hanging and shelf space, with a roof light above to keep it feeling bright and spacious. ➤



#### THE OWNERS

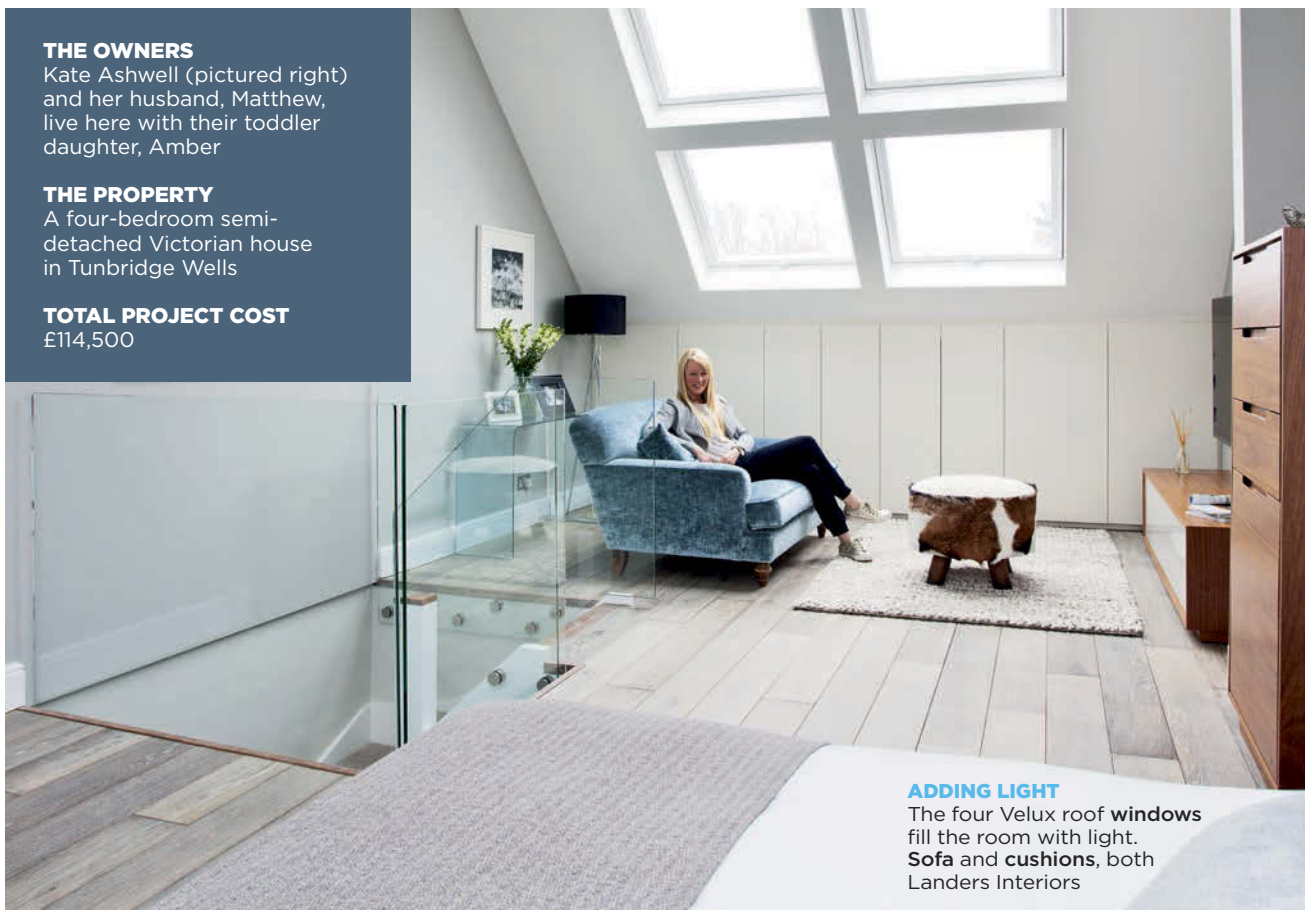
Kate Ashwell (pictured right) and her husband, Matthew, live here with their toddler daughter, Amber

#### THE PROPERTY

A four-bedroom semi-detached Victorian house in Tunbridge Wells

#### TOTAL PROJECT COST

£114,500



#### ADDING LIGHT

The four Velux roof windows fill the room with light. Sofa and cushions, both Landers Interiors



#### DRESSING SPACE

Left Nestled between the bedroom and wet room, the dressing room features bespoke wardrobes by Leaves of London, with pale doors to reflect light



#### BESPOKE PIECES

Above Bespoke TV unit and eaves cupboards, from Leaves of London. Engineered wood floor, Havwoods

**WET ROOM**

The room is big enough for double basins as well as a walk-in shower. High-end fixtures and tiles from Villeroy & Boch and Hansgrohe give the space a luxurious feel



'Originally, we wanted the whole of the loft to be open plan but Steve at the loft company suggested fitting concealed sliding doors at the entrances to the walk-in wardrobe and wet room,' Kate explains. 'These work really well as the space can be opened up if we want it to be, but we can shut the doors at night to block out the light from the roof lights or if one of us wants to shower or get dressed without disturbing the other.'

With a family bathroom on the first floor, Kate and Matthew didn't feel the need to include a bath in their loft scheme, opting for a stylish wet room with a double-ended walk-in shower, double basins and two heated towels rails; one at either end. Matthew had always wanted a wet room and, as it's a space that is only going to ever be used by the couple, they felt that they could pull out the stops with high-end fixtures and fittings.

'It was a heart-stopping moment watching the glass screen for the shower being craned in over the roof, as it was too big to get through the house and up both of the staircases,' says Kate. 'The best piece of advice I can give to anybody considering a similar project is to get the building work done before you do any improvements to your drive or gardens. You'll have to have scaffolding up for some time and, depending on the size of your job, a constant supply of skips coming and going, which could undo any work you'd had done on the outside of your house.'

When it came to the colour scheme, Kate knew she wanted a cool palette of grey, white and blue. The wall

shade came first; Farrow & Ball's Pavilion Grey, which then influenced the other elements, from the bespoke walnut furniture to the textured, engineered wood flooring. The couple also invested in an Occhio lighting system, a contemporary, modular design with programmable dimmer switches. 'We chose a combination of spotlights, bedside lights and a pendant trio over the stairwell,' Kate explains. 'We also bought a 3D TV as it's a great space to relax and watch a good film. The time we spent in getting the design just right has really paid off.' 

**THE COSTS AND CONTACTS**

Construction and glazing

**£75,000**

Wet room

**£20,000**

Decorating

**£11,500**

Lighting

**£3,500**

Flooring

**£3,000**

Furniture

**£1,500**

TOTAL

**£114,500**

**Design and build** A1 Lofts and Extensions, 0800 019 2678, [alpms.co.uk](http://alpms.co.uk)  
**Glazing** Value Conservatories, 01932 354821, [valueconservatoriesltd.co.uk](http://valueconservatoriesltd.co.uk)  
**Glass balcony and balustrade** Total Glass Solutions, 01689 862903, [totalglasssolutions.net](http://totalglasssolutions.net)  
**Flooring** Havwoods, 01524 737000, [havwoods.co.uk](http://havwoods.co.uk)



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Casement Window



Bay Window



Gable Window

Doors

Windows

Blinds



# MODERN KITCHEN MAKEOVER

Tired of their dated kitchen-diner, Paolo Lucchini and Graham Thompson have created a contemporary space with some personal touches

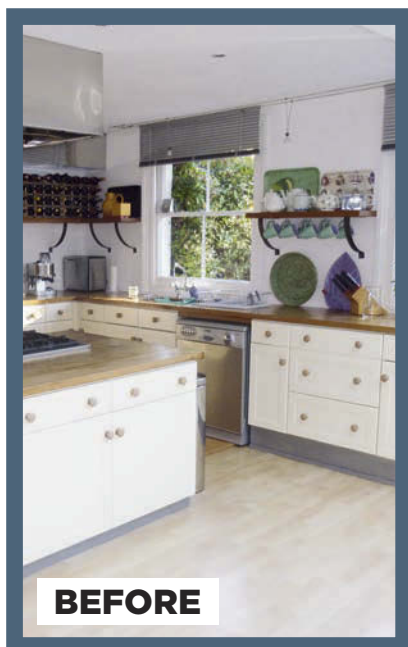
## OPEN-PLAN AREA

The new kitchen looks bright and modern and has plenty of room for cooking and entertaining. **Units** and **engineered oak flooring**, Cue & Co. **Oven** Neff. **Artwork**, Habitat. Breakfast bar **stool**, Ikea

DON'T MOVE, IMPROVE







**BEFORE**

#### BLAND SCHEME

**Left** The old kitchen was looking tired and was dominated by an extractor fan that ran around the ceiling



#### THE OWNERS

Paolo Lucchini (pictured left) and his partner, Graham Thompson, who are both retired, live here

#### THE PROPERTY

A three-bedroom Victorian semi-detached house in White City, London

#### TOTAL PROJECT COST

£78,000

**W**hen Paolo and Graham brought in a team of builders to transform the kitchen in their home of 15 years, Paolo had a few special requests. 'I hate handles on units, so I didn't want any included in the design,' he recalls. 'And I also wanted a wine rack, and somewhere to put laundry as the washing machine is in here.'

Having a bespoke kitchen fitted meant that he was able to satisfy all of his special requirements, as well as create a stunning space where the couple can entertain while he indulges his love of cooking.

Although they liked the layout of the original kitchen, they wanted to replace its old oak units. They also wanted to hide an unsightly extractor, and to introduce some practical innovations.

'We were growing tired of the look of the kitchen as everything was very beige and wood,' says Paolo. 'The cooker was in the island with a large extractor fan above, with ducting that went around the room. We also only had floor units, which meant we had to bend down all the time. As we're growing older, we wanted units we could reach up to. We also wanted to bring in more light, add sliding doors to the garden, and have a downstairs toilet.'

They found their builders, Cue & Co, through friends that the firm was doing some work for. 'I went to talk to



#### ROOM TO DINE

The rooflight means that Paolo, Graham and guests can eat under the sun or the stars. **Dining table and chairs**, Conran Shop. **Fridge-freezer**, Bosch. 19th-Century **dresser**, sourced in Switzerland

them while they were working at my friend's house,' explains Paolo. 'I explained what I wanted to do, and gave them quite a bit of lead time before the renovations started.'

The couple actually began talking to Cue & Co in the summer of 2013, and work didn't start until April 2014. 'By allowing plenty of time between approaching the builders and actually starting the project, we ended up discussing a lot of details that we otherwise wouldn't have,' says Paolo.

The couple didn't need to extend the space as it was already large enough with a glazed roof above the dining area providing plenty of natural light. In fact, the only structural work that was needed was removing a half wall below a window to make way for the sliding doors.

Paolo and Graham found a place to rent two houses away, so that they could move out and the firm could have the place for three months. 'They did all the hard work,' recalls Paolo. 'They got in the architect, the lighting specialist, plumbers, the flooring specialist and painters. And all the cabinets were handmade in their joinery.'

Paolo visited the house on a daily basis to check on the progress. 'I was basically sitting on the builders' backs but they probably would have worked as well without me,' he laughs. 'The project was initially going to be finished in two months, except we also asked them to

## DON'T MOVE, IMPROVE

### CUPBOARD SPACE

**Below** Clever storage ideas have been incorporated into the design to keep the room free of clutter



redecorate the house, so we stayed out for three months. Because the house we were staying in was so close by, they could knock at our door with any questions they had.'

Paolo and Graham got some ideas for their new kitchen from a proposal that John Lewis had done for them, although they eventually went with Cue & Co's designs. 'We thanked John Lewis by ordering carpets from them,' Paolo adds with a smile.

Anxious to rid the kitchen of the beige feel it had previously, Paolo and Graham chose a grey island with a dark grey top, while the units against the walls were in an almost ice white shade. The entire scheme was chosen to complement the lead colour of their dining table. There is more grey on the sliding door frames and the glazed roof, helping to link the whole space together.

Paolo and Graham didn't entirely forsake the wood that had previously dominated their kitchen, as the old vinyl flooring has been replaced with engineered oak.

Providing an interesting contrast to the hi-tech look of the room, is a 19th-century dresser that was bought in Switzerland and is now used for storage.

The extractor fan has been discreetly hidden away, and Paolo and Graham also took the opportunity to switch from gas to an induction oven. 'I love it as it is as fast as gas and easy to clean,' says Paolo. 'I cook a lot –

I think I make a good Italian pasta and I like to bake.'

The kitchen island also contains cupboards that look like drawers from the outside, but actually conceal the washing machine and somewhere to store the laundry.

During the renovation, all the windows were replaced and glazed doors now make it possible to enjoy the garden while sitting indoors in the comfort of an armchair. 'I love that spot,' says Paolo. 'Nobody would sit there before but now it has a totally different feeling. It has all been beautifully done.' 🍷

### THE COSTS AND CONTACTS

Units and electrics

**£36,600**

Digging and building works

**£21,600**

Downstairs toilet

**£14,400**

Sliding doors

**£5,400**

TOTAL

**£78,000**

**Architect, designer and fitter** Cue & Co, 020 7731 4728, cueandco.com  
**Appliances** Neff & Bosch

WORD ALISON JONES AND ANNA MORLEY STYLIST  
MARLIES WINKELMEIER PHOTOGRAPHS JODY STEWART



Discover 17 things you can do to your home without planning permission at [realhomes.co.uk](http://realhomes.co.uk)

# PLANNING PERMISSION EXPLAINED

Chartered surveyor Peter Richards describes how the process works – essential information if you're planning to transform your home

## **Q WHAT IS PLANNING PERMISSION?**

**A** Also known as 'planning consent', planning permission is the formal approval from a local authority for the erection or alteration of a building. This permission is also required for a change of use of buildings or land.

## **Q IS IT NECESSARY FOR EVERY PROJECT?**

**A** There are certain types of project that don't require express planning permission; instead, they qualify under permitted development (PD) rights. In recent years, the Government has extended what is permissible under PD in a bid to speed up the planning process.

## **Q HOW WILL I KNOW IF MY PROJECT IS COVERED BY PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT?**

**A** As a general rule, PD rights cover minor extensions, demolition and certain changes of use, such as loft, garage or cellar conversions. However, you need to check [planningportal.gov.uk](http://planningportal.gov.uk) to make sure the project you're considering meets the PD criteria – for instance, a single-storey rear extension cannot currently extend beyond the original house by more than six metres if an attached property or by eight metres if detached. And while most houses

have PD rights, flats and maisonettes do not, so planning permission is required. PD rights are also reduced in Conservation Areas, National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, but not in the green belt.

## **Q CAN I GET PROOF THAT THE WORK IS ALLOWED?**

**A** If you want to be completely certain your project is legal, you can apply to your local authority for a certificate of lawful development. This proves that the development is legal, which could be important when you come to sell.

## **Q HOW DO I APPLY FOR PLANNING PERMISSION?**

**A** An application needs to be submitted to your local authority. The forms are typically the same across all local authorities and can be accessed, completed and uploaded via [planningportal.gov.uk](http://planningportal.gov.uk). You will need to submit scaled plans of your proposal and a location plan based on an up-to-date Ordnance Survey map. Take a look at the flowchart for details.

## **Q WHAT'S THE COST OF APPLYING?**

**A** The fees vary depending on the nature of the application. For example, a full application for a new build is £385, whereas an application

for a residential extension not covered by PD is typically £195. Welsh authorities have a different fee schedule, and applications for listed buildings or those in Conservation Areas don't incur a charge.

## **Q HOW QUICKLY WILL I RECEIVE A DECISION?**

**A** Local authorities will usually advise of a target determination date when validating your application. For small-scale projects, they normally aim for eight weeks from validation to decision.

## **Q WHAT SHOULD I DO IF MY APPLICATION IS TURNED DOWN?**

**A** You have the ability to appeal the decision to the planning inspectorate. Your planning refusal notice will outline whether or not you can appeal and specify a time period in which an appeal must be submitted. An independent planning inspector, who will take into account national and local policy, as well as the impact of the proposal, will then consider the appeal.

## **Q WHAT IS SECTION 106 AND DO I NEED TO WORRY ABOUT IT?**

**A** Section 106 agreements are obligations that run alongside some planning applications. They

## STEP BY STEP

allow local authorities to secure monetary contributions to offset the impact of the proposal or control restrictions on the planning consent being sought. Normally, Section 106 agreements are reserved for larger applications; however, some local authorities are now using them to secure affordable housing contributions for developments of single plots, so it's worth asking your local authority what the policy is in your area.

**Q I WANT TO EXTEND MY HOUSE BUT THERE'S A TREE IN THE WAY - CAN I JUST CUT IT DOWN?**

**A** It would be advisable to contact the council to ascertain whether the tree has a preservation order on it. If you are in a Conservation Area, you will also need to get special consent.

**Q WHO CAN I EMPLOY TO HELP ME WITH THE APPLICATION?**

**A** There are a range of companies offering assistance through the planning system, such as architects, planning consultancies and surveyor practices. I would suggest you ask people in the local area, as word-of-mouth is normally the best recommendation.

**Q DO YOU HAVE ANY TIPS FOR MAKING THE PLANNING PROCESS SMOOTHER?**

**A** Provide good, clear information in the application and look to communicate your proposal to all stakeholders, such as neighbours, parish and town council, and planning officers. I always say it is better to advise your neighbours of your plans so they can ask questions, rather than them learning about it through a third party and not really understanding your proposal. If objections can be avoided, it makes the planning team's job of processing your application easier. 🗣️





## UNSUITABLE SPACE

**Right** The kitchen had been extended in the past but was too small for the Baker family's needs, and the interior was dated



# CONTEMPORARY EXTENSION TO VICTORIAN HOME

The Baker family has swapped a dated kitchen for a sleek space big enough for ping-pong

**T**he Baker family had an unusual criteria they wanted met when planning how big their new kitchen-diner was to be. 'We wanted space to play table tennis indoors,' laughs Anne-Marie. 'Which meant we needed room for a folding table tennis table. Two of our children are keen players and now we can just push the chairs aside in the seating area and get the table out.'

The Bakers have lived in their Victorian semi for five years – they began making plans to convert their kitchen 12 months after moving in, finishing it two years later. The house is tall and narrow, and by the time the loft conversion that is now underway is complete, it will cover five storeys.

'When we bought the house, everything was very dated and it needed a lot of love,' recalls Anne-Marie. 'We couldn't afford to do everything at once so we were originally going to start with a loft conversion to give our three children a bedroom each. Then, we decided it was best to start with the downstairs and have a lovely kitchen and living area, and just muddle through with the bedrooms for a while longer.'

As the house is in a Conservation Area, the family had to get planning permission for the new extension. The kitchen had been extended in the past but was too small for their needs, and had some rather original décor. 'It was very Seventies, but probably very modern in its time,' says Anne-Marie. 'It had open shelves which just gathered dust, and a pink floor. It was stone or granite or something, but it was very pink.' ➤

### THE OWNERS

Anne-Marie Baker and her husband, Graham, a finance director (pictured), live here with their children Rosie, 22, Joe, 20, and Charlie, 14, along with Sandy, the cocker spaniel, and Eevie, the Jack Russell

### THE PROPERTY

A four-bedroom Victorian semi-detached house in Highgate, London

### TOTAL PROJECT COST

£281,250





**BIGGER AND BRIGHTER**

The rooflight and glazing to the rear ensure the new kitchen is filled with light. Kitchen units and Miele appliances, Kitchen Continental. Wine glass chandelier, Dwell. Floor tiles, World's End Tiles. Recessed spotlights, Collingwood Lighting. Breakfast bar stools, Atlantic Shopping



One aspect of the kitchen that Anne-Marie liked, and did want to keep in some form, was the glass in the ceiling: 'We wanted it to be light and airy, and to get as much glass in the roof as possible,' she reveals. They called on Andrew Mulroy Architects, who drew up plans to extend to the rear and side of the house, doubling the size of the kitchen area.

'It was quite a big project,' says Anne-Marie. 'The whole of the ground floor was reconfigured as we also wanted to put in a shower room and bedroom on the ground floor for my mum, who is not very mobile. In the kitchen, we wanted to have lots of space and a nice big island for us to use. The whole family likes cooking and we really wanted all of us to be able to get in there to cook at the same time.'

Another 'must' was an improved view of the back garden. 'We weren't able to see it before because the kitchen is on the lower-ground floor and there was only a small window,' says Anne-Marie. 'My husband and I took on the garden project ourselves. We dug out the garden before and during the building project. Now we have got lovely sliding doors and a patio at the same level as the kitchen-diner. There are just a few steps up to the garden and we have a lovely view of it. We have also got a new fishpond, which means we can sit at the dining table and watch the goldfish.'

The pink floor has gone, replaced with pale porcelain tiles that blend with the neutral light-grey and white palette that Anne-Marie chose inside. The theme is continued outside in the pale grey of the basalt slabs that make up the patio, and the zinc cladding on the exterior of the extension – a markedly contemporary contrast to the brick of the Victorian house.

'We wanted the kitchen to be very plain, simple and sleek,' Anne-Marie explains. 'To add some colour we've got a beautiful, bright mural of a flamingo on one wall that I spotted at a design fair. I just saw it across the room and thought "Wow! I love it." and had to have it. It came in strips and we put it on ourselves, very nervously. Now it's finished the flamingo looks like it is dipping down to the pond by the rear window.'

When it came to the layout of units and appliances, Anne-Marie had lots of ideas. 'Graham is a finance director for an international pharmaceutical company and we've moved around a lot,' she explains. 'It means I've experienced a lot of kitchens in my time and learnt what I like and what I don't. I wanted it to be ergonomic with a nice big island and lots of space. There is a dishwasher next to a big larder cupboard where you can stash plates and things, so you don't have to wander round the kitchen between the dishwasher and the cupboard.'

Anne-Marie had hoped to have a hob in the island, so she could serve breakfast directly from pan to plate. 'But having the big glass roof light directly above meant I couldn't have an extractor fan,' she reveals. 'It was a shame, but it is a lovely piece of glass.' Instead, a wine glass chandelier from Dwell hangs from the ceiling, adding a little whimsy to the room, as well as proving very useful for extra glasses during parties.

Anne-Marie and her family chose to remain in the house while the renovation was going on – something she did begin to regret. 'It was a bit of a nightmare,' she says. 'We had a temporary kitchen set up in the living room but, for some reason,



we only had one socket, which meant we couldn't use the toaster and the kettle at the same time. It was fun to start with, a bit like when you're camping, but it did wear us down over the months. However, even if we hadn't been living in the house, I think it's important to be close by in order to check on things and watch what the builders are doing.'

Other than having to endure living on a building site, there were no major hitches during the project. And the family is thrilled by the end result – with the extra space coming in particularly useful now that the house is in disarray again due to the loft finally being converted.

'I'm project-managing the conversion,' reveals Anne-Marie. 'I'm an accountant by trade but I've been on an extended career break because of renovating the house. I hope very much to be doing something else later this year when it's all completed!'





#### STRIKING CONTRAST

The zinc cladding and the shape of the extension stand out against the Victorian house, and the lush green of the garden. Sliding doors, SKG London. Basalt paving and coping stones, CED

WORDS ALISON JONES PHOTOGRAPHS ALAN WILLIAMS



#### BOLD ARTWORK

A flamingo mural from Surface View is a fun feature in the new space

#### THE COSTS AND CONTACTS

Building/building control

**£185,900**

Fees and surveys

**£41,900**

Kitchen, appliances and splashback

**£28,300**

Sliding doors

**£13,700**

Light fittings and alarm

**£3,600**

Patio and pond

**£3,100**

Tiling

**£3,000**

Shower room

**£1,750**

TOTAL

**£281,250**

Architect Andrew Mulroy Architects, 020 726 5123, mulroy.info  
Builders My London Builders  
Structural engineers Price & Myers



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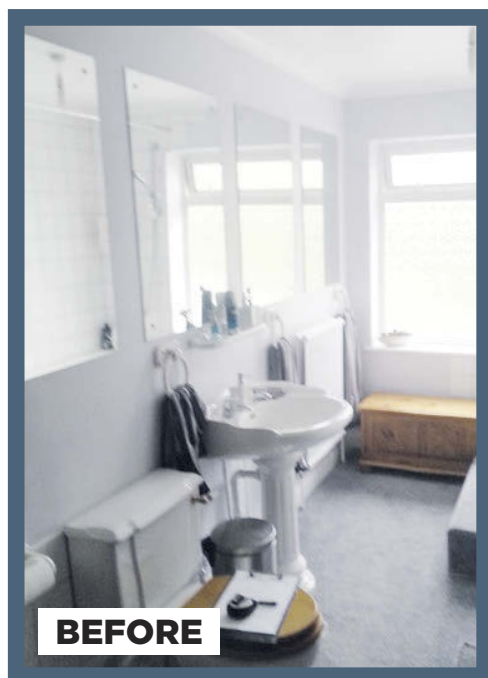
Windows

Blinds



#### STEAM ROOM

**Right** A large window at the end of the old bathroom restricted the layout. Bricking it up and adding small windows on the side elevations created space for the bespoke steam room



## HOTEL-STYLE STEAM ROOM

Sophie and Glenn Parker-Hodds' eye for detail led to a luxurious bathroom with spa-inspired features

**T**he home that Sophie and Glenn bought 30 years ago has changed dramatically over time. When their two children came along they extended twice, giving them more living space and five bedrooms. 'Our son and daughter have left home now they're in their 20s,' says Sophie. 'Glenn and I talked about possibly moving or even taking on a self-build, but we both decided that it would be difficult to beat living here; the house is in a quiet cul-de-sac with a beautiful south-facing garden and we have lots of friends nearby.'

In the end, the couple decided to stay put; but to update some of the rooms and refresh the decor. New units and appliances transformed the kitchen, but the bathroom needed a little more thought and planning. A two-storey extension some years before had increased the size of the ground floor by a significant amount and had also made their upstairs bathroom larger. Set in the centre of the house it protrudes out between two of the bedrooms.

This gave them more space, but the long, fairly narrow room had a large window at one end, which meant they were restricted when it came to the layout. In recent years, both Sophie and Glenn tended to use one of the more modern showers they'd had installed in the two en suite bathrooms, so the family bathroom had become rather redundant.

The couple agreed that installing a shower and steam room would make the bathroom something rather special, and a space that would get a lot more use. 'Both of us love using the spa facilities in hotels that we stay in and ➤

#### THE OWNERS

Sophie Parker-Hodds (pictured) lives here with her husband, Glenn, and Ellie, their cocker spaniel. They are both retired

#### THE PROPERTY

A five-bedroom detached 1950s house in Newbury, Berkshire

#### TOTAL PROJECT COST

£25,091



DON'T MOVE, IMPROVE



**SLEEK DESIGN**

The scheme was inspired by the Bisque etched-copper Arteplano **radiator** from Hot Interiors (on right of picture). **Tanking kit, wet tray, steam generator, bronze bespoke glass panels, benches, Hansgrohe hand shower, Cifial Mini Vastus shower head and arm, all InStilDesign**



decided to look into what was possible here,' explains Sophie. 'We did consider a steam pod, but they just didn't seem big enough. We wanted a good-sized space and to be able to accommodate four people, so we could use it with friends and family when they're visiting, too.'

A retired structural engineer, Glenn had already set about redesigning the layout and had asked a local glazing company to brick up the old window at the end and replace it with two side windows. 'This didn't require planning permission as the windows were far enough away from the boundaries either side and we had obscure glass fitted,' says Glenn. 'I wanted them installed as close to the main part of the house as possible, enabling us to have the biggest steam enclosure we could at the far end.'

Meanwhile, Sophie had already seen – and ordered – a striking etched copper-plated radiator, deciding that the whole scheme would be designed around it. 'I saw it in a showroom and fell in love with it,' she says. 'It was a little expensive but each one is slightly different. I told Glenn to think of it as a piece of modern art, not just a radiator.'

By chance, they discovered a neighbour was the financial director of a bathroom company that dealt with Swedish steam rooms, and agreed that the firm should have a look at the project. Martina Landhed, the design director, came to survey the room and explore the possibilities. 'She talked to us about what we wanted to achieve. While we would have liked to find space in there for a bath as well, I explained that it was proving difficult to fit one in,' says Glenn. 'As both Sophie and I prefer to shower, Martina persuaded us not to include one in the scheme at all, and focus on creating a luxurious and spacious shower and steam room instead.'

At 6' 3" Glenn wanted to be able to sit on a bench in the steam room and stretch his legs out along it. Martina measured out the space and there was just enough room between the back wall and new windows to do this. Her design included benches on either side with smoked-glass panels and a door. 'The curved benches are comfortable to sit on while their gentle sloping shape means that the water runs off them,' adds Sophie.

Local builder Kevin Robertson and his team were commissioned to undertake the installation. 'Their eye for detail was phenomenal; in fact they did everything the way I would have done it myself,' says Glenn.

The coppery tones of the radiator influenced the colour scheme in the room, with the dark wood cabinetry and mosaic tiles echoing the etched detailing. Martina knew that tailored storage was high on the couple's wish list, and recommended a mirrored cabinet with integrated lighting to make applying make-up easier for Sophie. Another request of Sophie's was to have somewhere to sit and dry herself. The long horizontal wall-hung unit houses all of the pipework and the steam generator, as well as providing storage for towels. 'It's strong enough to sit on and its design matches the rest of the furniture, too,' adds Sophie.

Another feature the couple are pleased with is the dehumidifier extractor fan that Martina installed. Sensitive to moisture, it automatically switches on and off after the shower or steam function has been in use and they don't have to wipe any of the surfaces down afterwards, including the glass. 'We just love being in here, it's such a relaxing space,' says Sophie. 'We don't miss the bath at all.' 🛁



#### ELEGANT FLOOR

**Above** Neutral tiles make the floor space feel larger. Saloni Dolomit porcelain **wall** and **floor tiles**; Waxman GL-044 Gomeda Jewel range gold-veined Bronze **mosaic tiles**; Thermonet Vario **underfloor heating**, all InStil Design

#### THE COSTS AND CONTACTS

Building work and installation  
**£8,000**

Shower/steam enclosure  
**£7,280**

Furniture  
**£3,122**

Tiles  
**£2,082**

Windows  
**£1,500**

Radiator  
**£1,277**

Sink and taps  
**£825**

WC  
**£689**

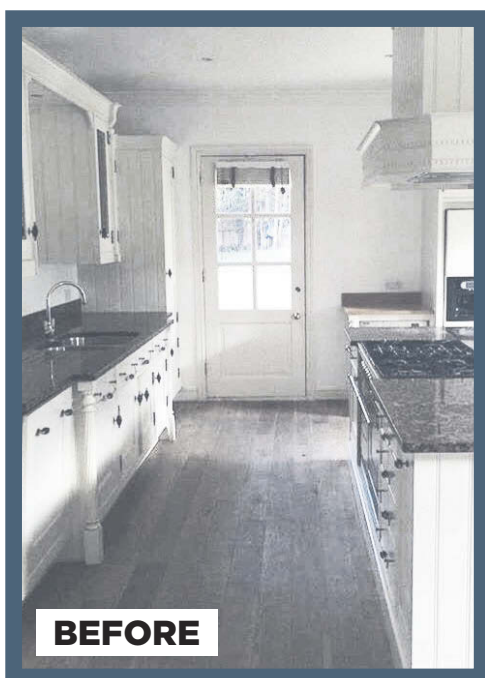
Underfloor heating  
**£316**

**TOTAL**  
**£25,091**

**Design and supply** InStil Design, 0800 677 1040, instil-design.co.uk  
**Installation** K Robertson, 0781 2093918  
**Radiator** Hot Interiors  
**Windows** Castle Windows







**BEFORE**

#### OLD LOOK

**Above** Three houses had been created in the former mansion, but they were not finished to a standard befitting the surroundings

## LUXURY MAKEOVER OF LISTED HOME

Contemporary styling and period features have been combined to create this lavish home

**C**herie Lee certainly didn't start small with her first commission as an interior design consultant. She was hired to turn part of a Grade II-listed mansion into a lavish house for a couple, that was also somewhere they could raise a family in the future. 'I was a freelance stylist before I became an interior designer,' explains Cherie. 'I had renovated my own property in the lead up to this, but this was my first big project.'

The mansion in Hertfordshire had been used for commercial purposes before a developer bought it and turned it into three individual homes.

'The developer made it suitable for residential living but it wasn't done to a very good standard,' she says. ➤





**FINE DINING**

A glazed divider by Clement Windows creates a broken-plan kitchen-dining space. Messalina pendant lights by Contardi. Kitchen units, Roundhouse. Dining table, Roche Bobois. Dining chairs, Marcel Wanders for Marks & Spencer.



### THE PROPERTY

A five-bedroom home in a Grade II-listed mansion in Hertfordshire was designed by Cherie Lee (pictured)

**TOTAL PROJECT COST**  
£560,000



‘There was very little left in the way of exterior features and, from the inside at least, you wouldn’t realise you were in a Georgian home. We took it right back to the brick.’

The couple who bought the five-bedroom home had previously lived in a two-bedroom property in Chelsea, so were upsizing considerably. Cherie was recommended to them by a builder she had worked with and who they approached about the renovation.

‘My brief was to retain or restore period features and give the property back its sense of age,’ she says. ‘But while it was important to them that their home had impact, they wanted it to be comfortable. They didn’t want guests to feel they couldn’t sit on a sofa or relax.’

‘My clients have quite urban tastes so it was a question of mixing that with a Georgian home. It was a collaboration between all of us, me, them and their architect, who is retired but a family friend.’

Rooms in the house were reconfigured so they were more suited to the couple’s needs.

‘Originally it had six bedrooms,’ reveals Cherie. ‘We knocked two of them together to create a master suite with large dressing room and his and her en suites.’

‘That left four other bedrooms, one of which is being used as a kind of games room/man-cave. They do have plans for a family but there’s just the two of them at the moment. It’s a house they are going to be in for a while.’

‘The fifth bedroom is in the attic. We made it open plan with a living area, bedroom, roll-top bath with views over the countryside, separate toilet and a walk-in wardrobe. It’s perfect for a teenager or perhaps a nanny.’

On the ground floor, the room dimensions are equally generous. The kitchen was opened up to what had previously been a family room/snug and is now an elegant dining room. Crittall glass defines the spaces while allowing light to flow between them.

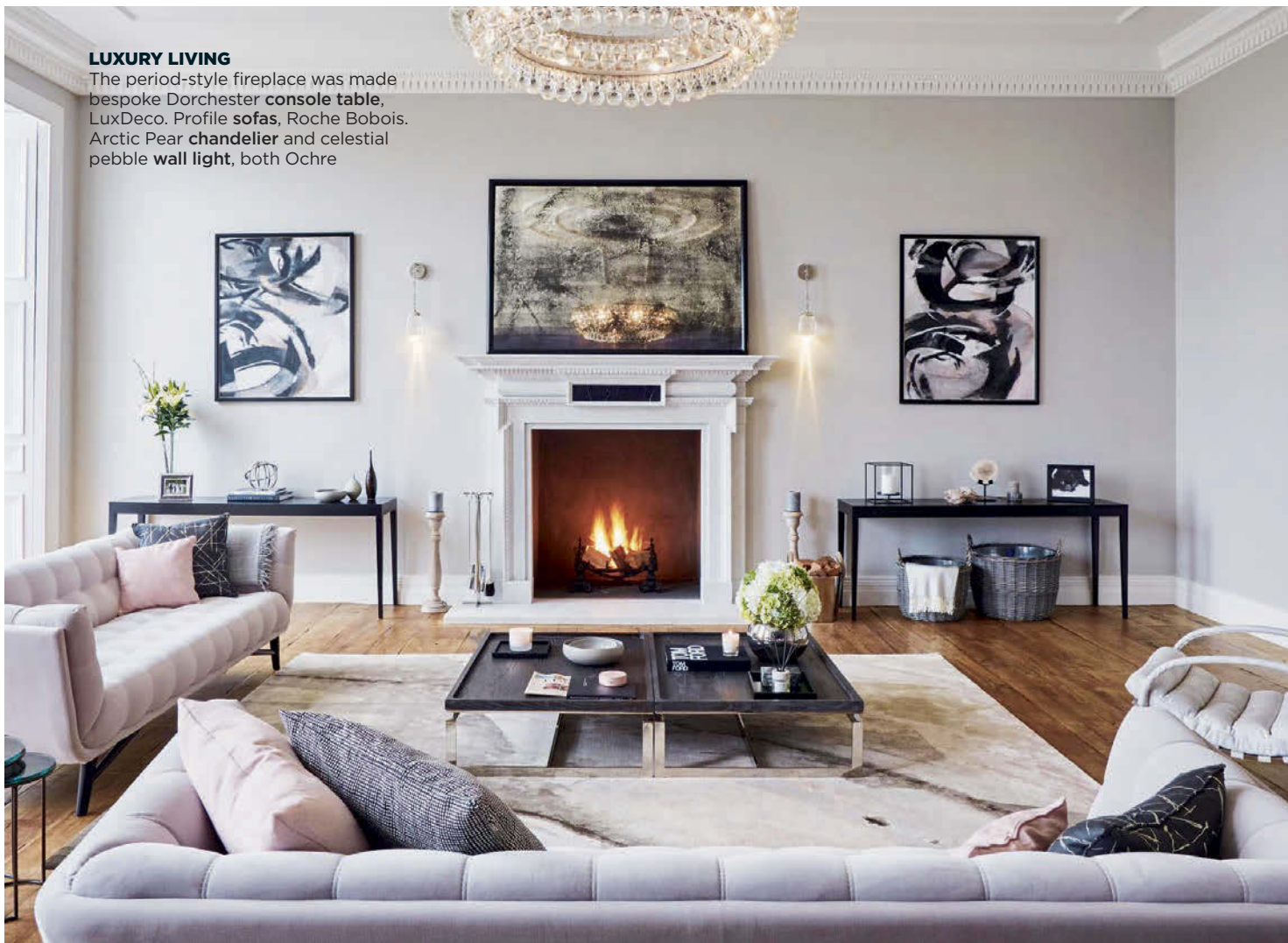
The large living room has been divided up into zones without separating it out. ‘We didn’t want to ruin the proportions of it because, at some point, it was probably a ballroom or something within the house,’ says Cherie. ‘We created a TV space and a formal end of the room. The idea was Sunday papers in front of the fire at one end and a media end with cinema screen at the other.’

The house’s original sash windows were repaired, cornicing was restored, fireplaces were sourced for the main rooms of the kind that were likely to have been there when it was built, and an antique oak floor was put down.

‘We traipsed round a lot of reclamation yards,’ says Cherie. ‘The oak floor was from France. I hadn’t worked with it before and getting it laid was a labour of love.’ ➤

### LUXURY LIVING

The period-style fireplace was made bespoke **Dorchester console table**, LuxDeco. Profile **sofas**, Roche Bobois. Arctic Pear **chandelier** and celestial pebble **wall light**, both Ochre



**BRICK BACKDROP**

**Below** An exposed brick wall is the backdrop to the bed, At La Maison. Walton beside tables, Lux Deco

**BATHING BEAUTY**

**Right** Bateau copper bath, William Holland. Taps, Samuel Heath. Shelves, Marks & Spencer



The renovation took 11 months from the planning stages to getting the work completed at the start of 2016. 'With listed buildings things crop up that you hadn't anticipated, and until you get into the fabric of the building, you don't really know what's there,' says Cherie. 'At one stage, the brief included plans for a two-sided fireplace between the kitchen and dining room. When we opened up the wall, there was the largest steel beam we'd ever seen, which meant that idea had to go. We were lucky that the clients were happy to adapt as we went along. We put in a tall fireplace with contemporary fire, and by the time it was finished, it didn't feel like a compromise at all.'

The use of polished plaster, and a sleek and modern kitchen satisfied the clients' desires for an urban edge, while still fitting with the period surroundings. 'I didn't want it to feel cold,' says Cherie. 'The antique oak flooring gave it warmth, and we also went with a nice decorative cornicing. The kitchen also features marble, which is a very luxurious material, but a traditional one that was used in old pastry larders.'

The renovation helped to bring light into spaces that had originally been gloomy. Planning permission was secured to turn one of the sash windows in the house into a door to the courtyard. It was done very discreetly and without really looking, you wouldn't know it wasn't a window. 'When we started the kitchen was so dark,' says Cherie. 'The same goes for the hallway. Other than in the

living room, the property didn't have a great flow of light, which was crazy in somewhere with such big windows. The hallway was terribly narrow and incredibly dark so we took out a toilet that was there, and the glass partition from the living room has also helped the flow of light.

'We were going to put a rooflight above the staircase but had major concerns about whether the light would actually filter down and give the effect we wanted. So we bought a light box – the type of thing that goes behind advertising boards – with a piece of frosted glass in front. It is set on a timer so comes on in daylight and goes off in the evening. It looks brilliant and is really cost-effective.'

The clients followed every step of the renovation. 'They were really proud of the result and thrilled with the finishing,' says Cherie. 'Immediately after they had a big family party to show it off, which was great to hear.'

**THE COSTS AND CONTACTS**

Building work  
**£400,000**

Furnishing  
**£100,000**

Kitchen  
**£60,000**

TOTAL  
**£560,000**

Interior design Cherie Lee  
Interiors, 020 8820 1450,  
cherieleeeinteriors.co.uk  
Builder JG Matthews,  
01707 262 351,  
buildingconservation.co.uk



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# Real Homes Q&A

When you're embarking on a major renovation, it pays to have all the help you can get. Over the following pages, *Real Homes'* experts offer advice on managing a project, updating your property's exterior, hiring tradespeople, and protecting yourself and your home during the work



**GREG TOON** is the founder of architectural design business Potential etc... He specialises in providing affordable concept designs to help homeowners and buyers visualise the potential of their properties, and writes a regular column for *The Sunday Times'* Home supplement on designing solutions for readers' problem houses.

[potentialetc.com](http://potentialetc.com) / [@potentialetc](https://www.instagram.com/potentialetc)  
[pinterest.com/toonlog](https://www.pinterest.com/toonlog)

## Can I be my own project manager?



Overseeing your own renovation could save you money, but you'll need to know your design, plans and trades inside out, says Greg


**'PROJECT MANAGER'**, in the context of a residential house redesign, means taking on the day-to-day running of the build. This is usually done by the main contractor, and is one of the reasons they are usually more expensive than other tradespeople. If you are hiring a number of subcontractors, you may decide to oversee the project yourself, looking after everything from budgets and schedules to managing deliveries.

Before taking the plunge and managing your own build, it is really important to understand the role and its demands. The first thing to note is that your job begins before a single spade is picked up on site. There are two critical areas that determine whether the job is going to run smoothly: having clarity on what is to be built and picking the right building team. The former may seem relatively

straightforward, as you probably have some planning permission drawings showing your designs, but in reality, you need much more detail to avoid confusion and areas of 'interpretation'.

Plans will need to include exact dimensions, show locations for mains supplies and waste outlets, and list materials and finishes, as builders will rightly use the cheaper option if nothing has been directly specified. Make sure the detailed drawings include electrical layouts, showing light fittings and switches, and floor junctions to ensure the various finishes are all level, plus a written specification list to show what products are to be used where, and the required construction method.

These documents – which are normally completed by an architect – form part of your contract with the builders, and can be used to settle confusion and even legal claims.

Once plans are finalised, put each part of the work out to tender. Choosing the right subcontractors is crucial, as a team that doesn't mesh well can result in clashes. Use the recommendations of friends, view potential trades' previous work and speak to prior clients. After you have done the groundwork of finalising the detailed plans and putting together your team, the rest of your role is mainly about being organised. You will be the point of contact for all logistical aspects of the project, including: ordering materials and skips and ensuring they arrive on time; booking subcontractor visits; liaising with Building Control and the local authority's planning department; keeping the site tidy and safe (see page 54 for more on site insurance); working out where to store goods to keep them in good condition; and paying the various parties on time. 

**HUGO TUGMAN** is the founder of Architect Your Home and Interior Your Home, and the managing director of Tugman Architecture & Design. Having run his practice with wife Jude since 1992, he has built up a wealth of knowledge in home design. A regular contributor to national newspapers and the author of *Architect Your Home*, he is also a speaker at the Homebuilding & Renovating Show.

[architectyourhome.com](http://architectyourhome.com) / @hugotugman



## Real Homes & QA

# What can I do to transform my home's external appearance?

From choosing window frames and doors to suit your property, to updating the façade with new cladding, Hugo shares his ideas

**Most people want to live in an attractive property, but, while making significant cosmetic changes to the exterior of a house can be expensive, the changes don't often add more space or function to a home – rather, they are simply an aesthetic improvement that can, if done well, add value and kerb appeal. However, in a bid to add wow factor, as well as function, the projects below can make a significant difference, both visually and practically – try one or combine them all for maximum impact.**

### OPTION 1: ADD A WELCOMING PORCH

Many houses appear very 'flat' from the front, so one way to create depth and a more inviting appeal is to add a porch, to provide practical shelter when digging keys out of a bag or an ideal place for storing coats and boots. Although most extensions added at the front of a house are outside of permitted development (PD), class C of PD allows for the addition of a porch without the need for a formal planning application. Bear in mind that limits regarding size, height and distance to a boundary may apply. See [planning.portal.gov.uk](http://planning.portal.gov.uk) for more information, as rules differ in different areas.

### OPTION 2: CREATE NEW WINDOW OPENINGS

If the front façade of the house is its 'face', then the sizes and shapes of the windows are the 'features'. When updating windows, decide which areas of the house require most natural light, and where you can make each opening most effective at bringing in the light, as well as making it look attractive from the outside.

**Right and below** As well as adding a new double-storey extension, rendering the façade and re-tiling the roof, the exterior of this 1950s detached house in south Wales has been transformed by installing large, floor-to-ceiling windows with slim frames in a modern grey finish

**AFTER**



Think about bigger windows in shapes to create better links to the outdoors, including floor-to-ceiling, picture windows and full-width designs.

### OPTION 3: RETHINK EXTERNAL FINISHES

When brick or pebble-dash walls are in a poor condition, or if you have various finishes on your façade that do not work well together, a great way to create a sense of unity is to give the whole elevation a cohesive, rendered finish. Traditionally, this was a sand and cement mix, which was then painted, but there are now acrylic renders in a range of colours that are much more crack-resistant and long-lasting. Renders also add waterproofing and, in some cases,



insulation, which can significantly improve thermal performance.

### OPTION 4: INVEST IN A NEW ROOF

Dominant roofs often spoil the beauty of houses, and frequently the presence of clunky, unattractive roof tiles is the source of the problem. Many older houses have inadequate roof insulation and no roofing felt, so stripping off old tiles, installing proper insulation and felt, and re-covering with more attractive slates or reclaimed clay roof tiles, can make a huge difference to thermal performance and appearance. **RH**

Visit [realhomes.co.uk/before-and-after](http://realhomes.co.uk/before-and-after) for the latest extreme exterior makeovers



**LINDSAY BLAIR** is the consumer expert for *Real Homes*. With a passion for finding the best deal and keeping you in the know about your shopping rights, she shares her insights into the latest initiatives, campaigns and best buys. Stay up to date with her blog or get in touch via Twitter.

[@Lindsays\\_home](http://realhomes.co.uk/consumer)



## Real Homes & QA

# What extra insurance do I need when taking on a home renovation?

You'll need additional cover for your building, contents and materials, plus protection if things go wrong, says consumer expert Lindsay

**'Before undertaking any work to your home**, such as an extension or conversion, look at what your home insurance policy covers, as many won't provide protection for new building work, materials and equipment, or liability for damage to a person or property,' explains Peter Richardson, director at specialist insurance firms Self-Build Zone and Build-Zone. 'Your insurance needs to cater for the existing elements of the property being renovated and any new works being undertaken.'

Specialist site insurance is probably the best option if you are building a new extension, remodelling to create new openings, or removing walls, as standard home insurance policies often don't give enough coverage. Some providers can revise an existing buildings and contents policy. 'If your current home insurer is able to upgrade your cover, get any changes in writing,' says Peter.

However, specialist insurance will provide protection specific to your project. It typically covers existing and new structures, work carried out through to completion, accidental damage to your own or neighbouring properties, stolen or damaged equipment, personal accident, legal expenses if a contractual dispute occurs, and protection for your possessions should you live in a caravan on site while renovating. This insurance would replace your standard policy for the duration of the work. 'If you chose to invest in specific site insurance, it will have protections not usually needed with a standard policy,' says Rory Grant, home portfolio manager at Endsleigh. 'And it will cover some of the pitfalls found with home insurance relating to leaving the property vacant, usually limited to between 30 and 60 days.' As it is not

uncommon to leave a house or flat empty during such work, having the proper cover will ensure your property and site are protected. This insurance will also cover machinery being used, and damage caused by third parties.


Insurance should be your first consideration once you have finalised the plans for improving your home. Many typical buildings and contents policies will either exclude losses involving damage to a home while alterations are being carried out, or reduce the cover significantly, which could leave you in breach of your mortgage agreement, and possibly result in costly repayments or repairs should something go wrong.

If you are managing the project, you will be responsible for making sure it adheres to health and safety regulations, which are outlined in Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 (CDM 2015). You have a duty to ensure the overall safety of planning works, risk assessment and address any concerns that arise during the build. 'Building sites are dangerous places, where people may get injured or have their property damaged, which will become your responsibility,' says Peter Richardson. 'Claims for injury can be large and could result in prosecution by the Health and Safety Executive.'

If you don't tell your insurer about building work prior to it starting, you could risk your policy being cancelled due to non-disclosure and any claim, regardless of its cause or nature, being declined. So long as you've provided accurate information about your property, renovation plans and the value of the project, plus past claims and the condition of the existing building, the premium should stay the same for the project's duration. 'If your existing insurer

wants to hike the cost of your policy, it is worth shopping around,' advises Money.co.uk editor-in-chief Hannah Maundrell. 'Go for one at a lower cost but ensure the policy is sufficient for all your needs, and the time required.'

If you are planning two projects on one property, site insurance only applies to both if they start and are finished simultaneously. If they aren't, you will need two separate policies.

Once the build has been signed off, you'll need standard buildings and contents insurance to come back into force immediately, and to include the new space, plus items bought for it. 

### WHAT SITE INSURANCE SHOULD COVER

- **New works.** The project's physical elements, including the existing structure, materials and temporary works throughout.
- **Public liability. For accidental damage to someone else or their property (not an employee)**
- **Employers' liability.** A statutory requirement, it applies where an individual agrees to provide their labour to you. It covers you in the event a worker is killed or injured on site. It is not needed if you only employ family members.
- **Loss or damage of plant and equipment you've hired or own.**
- **A caravan and contents,** plus personal possessions.
- **Personal accident. If you are injured while managing the project, this will provide money towards a temporary manager.**
- **Legal expenses** if there's a contractual dispute.

Visit [realhomes.co.uk](http://realhomes.co.uk) to find out more about your responsibilities on site

# Where can I find reputable trades to help transform my home?

**RH**  
DIRECTORY

Whether you are extending or remodelling, hiring the right help is key. Consumer expert Lindsay Blair reveals the sites to search

## Architect

■ **ARB** [www.architects-register.org.uk](http://www.architects-register.org.uk)  
**0800 389 6221**

A person can only call themselves an architect if they are registered with the Architects Registration Board (ARB) following seven years of training. Set up by Parliament as the independent UK regulator of architects, the ARB's website has a wealth of resources to help you find a professional in your area, plus check names of local architects to see if they are properly registered. Search by your address and postcode, or the architect's name or company; learn more about each, find contact details and website links.

■ **RIBA** [www.architecture.com](http://www.architecture.com)  
**020 7580 5533**

Providing training and support for its members, the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) only allows architects to join if they adhere to a strict code of practice. Search the database of more than 3,000 chartered practices using your postcode, city or town, and refine by specialism, or search for a particular practice to find out more about it.

## Builder

■ **FMB**  
[www.fmb.org.uk](http://www.fmb.org.uk) **0330 333 7777**

Founded in 1941, the Federation of Master Builders (FMB) is the largest trade association in the UK's building industry. Whether you are working on a small or large-scale project, the builders in its directory have all been vetted and meet strict criteria for membership – which looks at credit checks, trading history, and ensures independent inspections for building work in progress every three years. The body also offers a dispute service if things go wrong. For best results, search by location and building type.

■ **TrustMark**  
[www.trustmark.org.uk](http://www.trustmark.org.uk) **0333 555 1234**  
Supported by consumer protection groups, such as Citizens Advice and Trading Standards, and licensed by the Government's Department for Business Innovation & Skills, TrustMark

can offer information and advice on the relationship between you and your builder, the standards of workmanship that you might expect, and how to check if a tradesperson is trustworthy. You can search for builders, as well as various other trades; find out the type of work they can help with; take a look at user reviews and link to websites.

## Electrician

■ **NICEIC**  
[www.niceic.com](http://www.niceic.com) **0870 013 0389**

Search for an electrician or renewable energy installer that's been assessed for competency by the National Inspection Council for Electrical Installation Contracting (NICEIC), using your postcode or the company name. The body will have approved those listed as being able to carry out electrical work to a high standard, in line with building regulations. If you can't find a company there, they're not registered or may use a different trading name or spelling.

## Kitchen or bathroom designer

■ **iKBBi**  
[www.ikbbi.org.uk](http://www.ikbbi.org.uk) **0845 519 2007**  
Recognised by the Government and Which? Trusted Traders, the Institute of Kitchen, Bedroom & Bathroom Installers (iKBBi) works with retailers, manufacturers, distributors and installers to better the standards of customer service across the industry. It was founded in 2007 to address an increasing number of complaints about unreliable tradespeople. Visit the website to find local members that have had credit, regulation and police checks, and are fully insured and vetted by iKBBi inspectors. There is also advice on your consumer rights, and what to do in the event of a dispute.

■ **BMA** [www.bathroom-association.org](http://www.bathroom-association.org) **01782 631619**

The Bathroom Manufacturers Association (BMA) is the trade body for businesses producing and selling bathroom products, ensuring retail standards are upheld and consumer needs met. As many bathroom

retailers offer design services in-house, it's good to find out which local showrooms are registered with the BMA to ensure they will offer service in line with the body's code of conduct. Search online using your postcode or the business name, if you have a showroom in mind. Take a look at the wealth of consumer advice guides online, too.

## Plumber

■ **APHC**  
[www.aphc.co.uk](http://www.aphc.co.uk) **0121 711 5030**

The Association of Plumbing & Heating Contractors (APHC) has plumbers inspected in line with membership rules, including accreditation under the Competent Persons Scheme and Water Regulations Approved Contractor Scheme. They must comply with minimum trading standards and building regulations, and follow a set-out complaints procedure. Visit the site for guides on understanding your plumbing and heating systems, and to search for a local tradesperson. 

### BEFORE YOU MAKE A CHOICE

■ Obtain at least three quotes from suppliers and compare each. Remember, the cheapest isn't always the best if not all your requirements are met.

■ **Ask potential suppliers for references – be wary if they are unwilling to share details of previous customers.**

■ View works previously completed by the supplier in person. Ask former clients about their experiences.

■ **Think about whether you can see yourself working with the tradesperson for the duration of the project.**

■ Agree details of what the tradesperson is responsible for, including hours and order of works, price and payment plan, before you sign a contract/supplier.

Visit [realhomes.co.uk](http://realhomes.co.uk) for advice on working with designers and tips for project success



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#### CRAMPED SPACE

**Above** The old kitchen was installed when the house was built, and featured an awkwardly positioned breakfast bar

## SLEEK AND STYLISH KITCHEN-DINER

A dated and cluttered space was transformed using ideas taken from the owners' trips abroad

**I**nspiration for a new kitchen can come from many places, but it was one couple's frequent trips to Geneva that brought them to Inline Kitchens' door. 'Their daughter lives in Geneva so every other weekend they travel over to babysit,' says Ian Winterburn, managing director of the family-run kitchen design and installation business.

'The kitchens they saw there have clean lines and no handles. When they came to us they wanted something similar. No nooks and crannies, just flat and smooth.' ➤

#### SLEEK LOOK

**Right** A wall was knocked down between the kitchen and dining rooms, and the new Remo Matt White and Remo Elm kitchen from Second Nature was located at the other end of the open-plan space



#### THE PROPERTY

A four-bedroom late 20th-century detached house in Pontefract, west Yorkshire

#### TOTAL PROJECT COST

£31,950

#### PROJECT MANAGER

**Left** Ian Winterburn of Inline Kitchens helped the clients create the type of kitchen-diner they'd seen in Geneva









A kitchen update was certainly overdue in the four-bedroom detached house, which had been built around the late 1970s/early 80s. 'The units that were in there had come with the house,' says Ian. 'They were a hessian-style formica with solid wood lipping.'

There was also a wooden breakfast bar jutting awkwardly into the room that had to be negotiated to get into the dining room, which itself was seldom used, except at Christmas. Once they had decided it was time to update their kitchen, the owners took their time making sure they got everything they wanted.

'They came in to see us in January 2015 but didn't have it done until April 2016,' recalls Ian. 'They were making sure they got it right. I've often found that if people rush into things they can get bits wrong.'

'For instance, they always thought they wanted to have the wall between the kitchen and dining room taken down, but weren't sure whether they should keep it as separate rooms. We were able to put the pictures in a computer and show them a 3D version of what it would look like, and that persuaded them.'

The space has now virtually doubled from 10 square metres in the kitchen alone, to 22.5 square metres when the dining room was incorporated into it.

An important part of the plan was to change the configuration of the kitchen and dining area around in order to take advantage of the lovely view to the rear of the house, out towards Yorkshire's Nostell Priory –

a Palladian house owned by the National Trust.

'The owners had lived in the house for quite a while and the only time they'd ever been able to appreciate the view was stood at the kitchen sink,' says Ian. New bi-fold doors were installed at one end of the room to offer panoramic views out across the garden to the Priory.

The house next door had previously been extended and Ian was able to call on the services of the same builders, MDM Construction, to knock down the wall between the kitchen and dining room, put in the bi-folds and complete the plastering.

Ian managed the rest of the project. 'We have our own kitchen fitters, plumbers and electricians,' he says. 'The hardest part of the job was the plumbing, because the drains were all at the back of the house where the kitchen had been located. We had to run a new drain right round the house for the new kitchen.'

The owners selected a Remo Matt White and Remo Elm kitchen from Second Nature, which Inline is a specialist retailer for. 'They thought if they went for just white it would be too stark, so they broke it up with the wood grain,' says Ian. 'The curved sides are a big thing at the moment, they soften the corners up. Instead of looking at a flat end as you walk through the door, you follow the corner round.'

In keeping with the uncluttered look the clients wanted, trays, tea towels and even jars are all concealed behind narrow cupboard doors which can be pulled out,

**BEAUTIFUL VIEW**

**Left** Modern furniture has been picked to co-ordinate with the style and colour of the new kitchen. For a similar **side table**, try the Bumble at Habitat. For a similar **dining table and chairs**, try the Fern dining set at Danetti

**WIDE OPEN**

**Right** The large bi-folding doors, from Bennion & Sons, replaced the old kitchen window, making the garden much more accessible. For a similar **sofa**, try the Tribeca at Made.com



while a Quooker Fusion – a 3-in-1 boiling water tap – means there is no need for a kettle. The streamlined units have no handles and the Crystal Grey quartz work surfaces are a slim 20mm, both helping to keep the space looking sleek.

The elm that breaks up the whiteness of the units is complemented by the floor, which looks like wood but is made from rubber. 'The flooring we've used is called Polyflor and is an interlocking vinyl floor,' says Ian. 'It's waterproof, and because it is rubber there is good sound insulation, so you don't tend to hear people walking across it. Price-wise, it is not far off the cost of laminate.'

Other innovations included in the design are a Neff oven with a slide away door, just like the ones seen on *Great British Bake Off*; automatic blinds in the new bi-fold doors, bought from Bennion & Sons Ltd in Ryhill, Wakefield; and two Kessebohmer Le Man corner storage units, which maximise space. 'The clients are a fairly fit couple, but as people get older they can often find it more difficult to get down and into corners to find items they need,' Ian explains. 'These have shelves that just swing out, which are more practical.'

The whole project, including the building works, took a month to complete, with the kitchen itself being fitted in just a week.

After putting up with a kitchen that was a relic from the past for so many years, the owners are understandably delighted with their new space.

'They can't believe how much better the new kitchen-diner is for them,' says Ian. 'It was one thing showing them how their finished room would look on the computer, but once it was all finished and they could see what they've ended up with, they were delighted. Their daughter came over from Geneva and her reaction was the one we like to get – she said it has real wow factor.'

**THE COSTS AND CONTACTS**

Building	<b>£6,450</b>
Units and doors	<b>£6,100</b>
Accessories	<b>£5,200</b>
Appliances	<b>£4,500</b>
Quartz work surfaces	<b>£3,500</b>
Block paving	<b>£2,500</b>
Fitting	<b>£2,350</b>

Flooring	<b>£1,350</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£31,950</b>

**Design and fitting** Inline Kitchens, 01977 602 001, inline-kitchens.co.uk  
**Building and plastering** MDM Construction, 07710 323267  
**Kitchen** Second Nature, sncollection.co.uk



# Contemporary design

If you're thinking of giving the exterior of your home a bold new look, take inspiration from this imaginative update

PHOTOGRAPHS **TONY HOLT DESIGN**



**BEFORE**



**AFTER**

## **UNINSPIRING DESIGN**

**Above** Featuring cramped rooms, this 1950s Hertfordshire home did not suit the family's needs

This detached family home, located at the end of a cul-de-sac in Hertfordshire, had stood largely untouched since it was built in the 1950s. The rooms were cramped and a detached garage was linked to the house by a poorly constructed infill. Architectural designer Tony Holt, of Tony Holt

Design, created a scheme that would extend the property on all four sides, retaining the corners of the existing structure and much of the roof.

On the ground floor, the staircase was relocated to create a double-height entrance hall that flows into a large, open-plan kitchen/dining/living space at the rear of the house

with full-height glazing that links to the garden. Two further living areas were also created on the ground floor, along with a games room and home office. The garage was rebuilt and became part of the main house, with a replacement detached garage built elsewhere on the plot. On the first floor, three new en suite bedrooms





### STRIKING FRONTAGE

Extensions have been added to each elevation, with the exterior clad in a palette of stone, render and brick to create a contemporary new look that is designed to stand the test of time

were added thanks to the new extensions, while a master bedroom was created at the rear, with a dressing room and roll-top bath on a mezzanine area above.

Externally, the house was given a contemporary appearance by applying white render with accent materials such as brickwork, natural

stone and small panels of metal cladding to help focus the eye on the main entrance. New powder-coated aluminium windows were added to complete the look. 'The tired existing building has been transformed beyond recognition,' says Tony. 'The property has gone from providing 189 square metres of accommodation

to 331 square metres. Externally, the house now looks and feels like it was built in the present day, and the contemporary palette provided by the stone, brick and render means that this new look should stand the test of time.'

**Build cost:** £350,000-£400,000

**Number of bedrooms:** Four

**Designer:** tonyholt-design.co.uk





BEFORE



AFTER

## MODEST HOME

**Above** The bungalow lacked a main living space and failed to connect to its surroundings

# A striking evolution



Architect Giles Lovegrove explains how he transformed this dated bungalow

PHOTOGRAPHS **COUPDEVILLE**

**T**his 1950s bungalow, near Wallingford, in Oxfordshire, had a kitchen-living space, bathroom and three bedrooms on the ground floor, a fourth bedroom in the loft space, and a separate workshop to one side. The owners wanted a modern, light-filled home suitable for their growing family, and with a good connection to the garden.

Their budget dictated that we reused as much of the existing building fabric as possible. So we developed a design that connected the bungalow and workshop using a

bespoke glazed extension, producing a unique courtyard arrangement.

The former workshop was the perfect location for a new master bedroom suite and living-dining room, with the latter becoming open-plan to the existing kitchen space thanks to the new extension. Internal insulation had to be added to the workshop, which had been constructed from a single brick skin. Fortunately, the bungalow already had adequate insulation.

All of the rooms in the existing bungalow were to be retained but modernised, with the bedroom on

the first-floor of the original bungalow becoming a playroom.

Externally, the entire property, including the roof, was clad in timber to bring the two halves of the building into one homogeneous whole. A corrugated fibreboard layer was added underneath the timber roof to ensure it remained watertight.

The result is a complete transformation that meets the owners' requirements and was achieved within their budget.

**Project cost:** £200,000

**Number of bedrooms:** Four

**Architects:** [coupdeville.net](http://coupdeville.net)





#### DRAMATIC CHANGE

**Above and right**

After being linked by a glazed extension, the bungalow and workshop were then clad in Thermowood heat-treated larch. The **windows** and structural **glazing** were supplied by NPH Installations. The **landscaping** is by Caroline Butler





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