

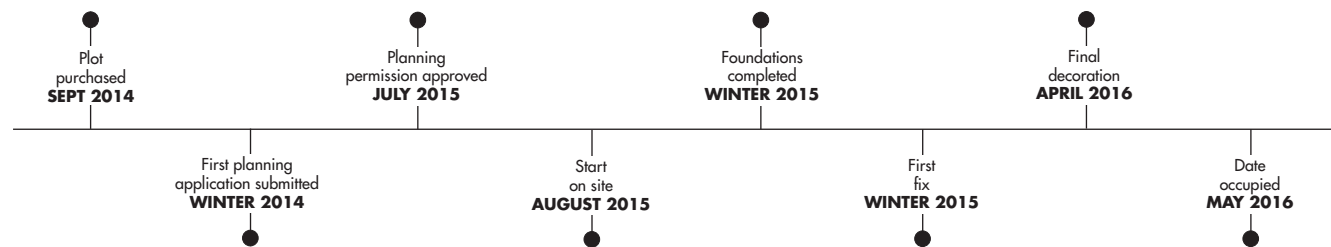
REAL PROJECT
EXTENSION AND REMODEL



A cottage to treasure

Kirstin Eriksson has transformed her Cotswold property by taking it from a neglected cottage to a perfect family home packed full of clever design ideas

TIMELINE



Located in an incredibly pretty Cotswolds village, a late-Victorian stone cottage attracted Kirstin Eriksson from the moment she saw it. “There was rising damp and nothing was in working order,” recalls Kirstin, who was keen from the very start that none of the charm and character of the property should be lost in the process of making it suitable for family life with her nine-year-old twins.

While it was clear that the cottage, as it stood, would not be ideal for a family, Kirstin had plenty of ideas for sensitively adapting and extending the space. Despite working full time, she still managed to get involved in the design process.

“At the time, I was working in the city and didn’t have time to design the layout, even though I love architecture and interiors,” explains Kirstin, who has since set up InsideOut Interior Design. However, finding an architectural firm that understood her vision for the property wasn’t easy.

“What is quite funny is that some of the proposals from architects were very nice but just didn’t take into consideration the original cottage — how we would use the space and that it needed to be suitable for family life.”

CREATING A FAMILY HOME

When Kirstin bought the house, the ground floor was made up of a tiny kitchen and an even tinier ground-floor bathroom, along with a living room and small dining area. A separate utility room was accessed through an external courtyard. On the first floor were three bedrooms and a master with en suite.

“The entire ground floor had to be reconfigured to improve

“We worked hard to maximise the space where we could — including building a mezzanine level”



A soft, neutral palette has been used throughout the home to help create a calming space.





the space and flow and adapt the house to modern family life,” explains Kirstin. It was decided that the old courtyard and separate utility room would become part of the footprint of the new layout, while an extension to one side would provide a flexible extra bedroom/living room and downstairs shower room. Upstairs, one of the bedrooms would be sacrificed to make way for a family bathroom, while the old en suite for the master bedroom would become a dressing room, with a fourth bedroom and en suite built into the attic space.

LONG-DISTANCE SUPERVISION

Luckily, Kirstin soon found a local architects firm who knew the area well and worked closely with them to find her perfect configuration. While doing all the interior design she took a hands-off approach to the practical work as she was too busy with her full-time job. “I would come up every Friday and supervise the building work – the last push was very painful,” she says of the eight-month project.

The damp and lack of insulation meant the whole of the kitchen floor needed to be dug out extensively and the staircase needed replacing, as did some of the walls due to the damp issues. The entire house also needed rewiring and although there was some heating, the house now enjoys underfloor heating while column radiators have been used elsewhere.

CREATING A GOOD MATCH

Kirstin spent a lot of time matching materials to make sure the extension fitted in with the original cottage. She sourced local stone from a nearby quarry and carefully selected a colour and shape to match the existing walls. Many of the windows, which were in a terrible state, have been replaced with double-glazed timber frames that replicate the original design.

Despite Kirstin’s attention to detail when it came to ensuring the extension would tie in perfectly with the existing house,



The living room remains in its original position at the front of the house and features a cosy woodburning stove.



FLEXIBLE SPACES
 Within the new ground floor extension is a flexible space that can be used as either another bedroom or a living area. The useful mezzanine level also provides another extra sleeping spot.



obtaining planning permission still proved to be something of a headache as even though the house is not listed, it does lie within a conservation area.

“Because we are deemed to be ‘the first house in the village as you enter, the restrictions were unreal,” says Kirstin. “They didn’t mind the roof lantern or us going up into the attic, but the new roof of the extension was the issue – the pitch, angle and materials. I told them I really wanted it to be in keeping and would be using the same stone, reclaimed materials, conservation rooflights and so on. In the end I rang the conservation officer and he finally agreed.”

MAXIMISING SPACE

It was important to Kirstin that no space should be wasted and this house is something of a masterclass when it comes to ingenious ways of making the most of every inch without the house seeming in any way crowded. The spaces have also been designed to adapt with the family as their needs change. “We worked hard to maximise the space where we could – including building a mezzanine level into the double-height ground-floor bedroom,” says Kirstin. “The house is now very versatile and flexible in its use and space.”

Other clever uses of space on the ground floor include the compact home office that has been located within the old utility room and is now accessed through a pocket door from the dining area. Additionally, there is also a new pantry and utility, which now occupies the old ground-floor bathroom and features a beautiful stable door. The loft conversion is another absolute triumph, providing a wonderfully cosy space that can be enjoyed by all ages.

BRINGING IN NATURAL LIGHT

Aside from transforming the house into a very family-friendly space, Kirstin was also keen to bring natural light in without altering the pretty original cottage windows. She says natural light is very important to her and she now loves the way the sun moves around the house.

In the dining area that now occupies the space where the old courtyard used to lie, the beautiful large roof lantern allows light to pour through into the centre of the house. Meanwhile, losing the wall between the original living room and open-plan kitchen diner has meant all the rooms can benefit from the newly lit areas. “Importantly, all the patio doors open into the garden – bringing the outside in is a big thing with us,” says Kirstin. [H](#)

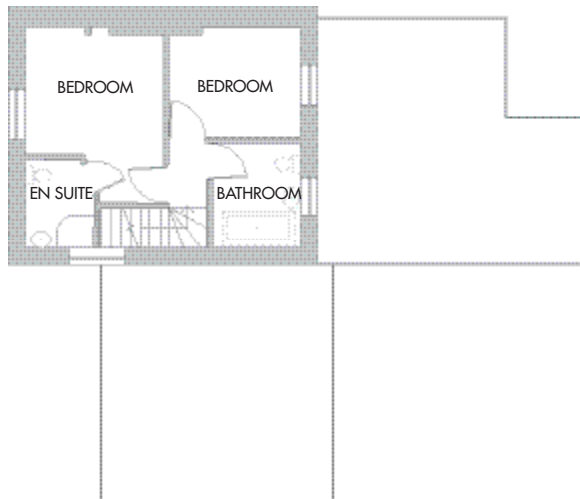


Above: The loft space has been converted into an extra bedroom. Folding shutter doors lead to an en suite that has been fitted with a small, deep Japanese-style tub.

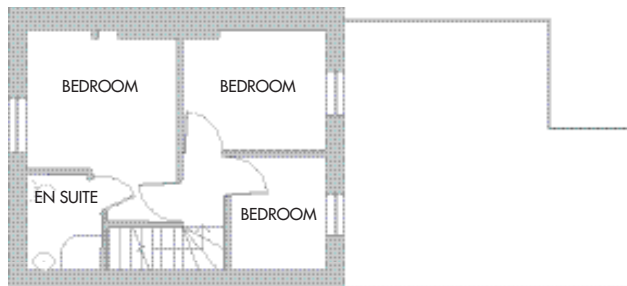
Below: In the downstairs shower room, the original stone wall of the house has been left exposed. The shower serves the new downstairs master bedroom.



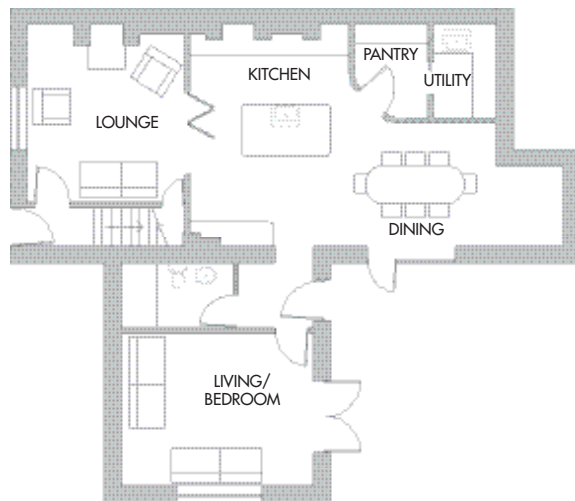
THE PLANS



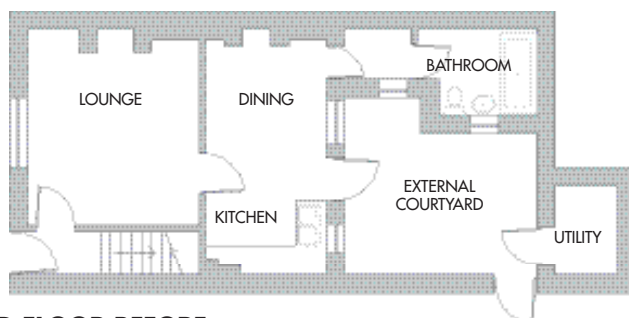
FIRST FLOOR AFTER



FIRST FLOOR BEFORE



GROUND FLOOR AFTER



GROUND FLOOR BEFORE

SUPPLIERS

ARCHITECT Apex Architecture:
www.apexarchitectureltd.com

KITCHEN Howdens: www.howdens.com

WOODEN FLOOR AH Peck Flooring
Contractors: www.ahpeck.co.uk

CARPETS Cotswold Carpets:
www.cotswoldcarpets.co.uk

PAINTS Farrow & Ball:
www.farrow-ball.com

IRONMONGERY Suffolk Latch:
www.suffolklatchcompany.com

LANDSCAPE GARDENING

Cotswold Garden Landscapes:
www.cotswoldgardenlandscapes.co.uk

THE DETAILS

Space was maximised throughout the house, with a child's seating area nestled into the staircase leading to the newly converted loft.

