

## KITCHEN

An electric range cooker provides plenty of heat during the colder months. An elegant faux chimney breast cleverly conceals the extractor fan. Glass lantern lights give the eye a through-line. Electric range cooker, Everhot. Cabinetry, Neptune. Walls in Rolling Fog, Little Greene. Mirror splashback, Rough Old Glass. Shaftesbury pendant lights; Shoreditch bar stools, both Neptune



# TO THE RESCUE

Trees creeping in the back doors and plants growing in the bath didn't stop Kate and James Thompson from taking on this former carriage workshop



## HOME TRUTHS

### THE PROPERTY

A former carriage workshop

**ROOMS** Sitting room, kitchen, utility room, study, cloakroom, cinema room, four bedrooms, three bathrooms

**LOCATION** Buckinghamshire

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**K**ate and James Thompson's new home had so much kerb appeal that Kate knew she wanted it even before the pair had crossed the threshold. 'It was one Saturday afternoon that the email from the estate agent pinged up with the photos of the property. I instantly fell in love with it and called them on the spot,' says Kate.

'At the time we were living in a renovated cottage, a mere three miles down the road, but we felt we were outgrowing it and also wanted

a bigger garden,' Kate explains. Upon viewing, the couple found that while the exterior was everything that they had hoped for, the interior was virtually derelict.

'The house had originally been part of an estate and we believe it was once two separate workshop buildings used to fix the carriages,' explains Kate. The property hadn't been touched inside for 30 years and as an elderly lady lived there with her carers living there, too, there were bedrooms on the ground floor. 'Everything needed to be ripped out and there



#### HALLWAY

Tumbled limestone flagstone tiles have been laid throughout the ground floor, adding period character. Bayonne Provenca limestone floor tiles, Mandarin Stone. Bobbin bench, Claire Garner Design Studio. Rug and artwork, Etsy. Frinky floor lamp, Pooky

## SITTING ROOM

**The large footstool doubles as a coffee table and makes a focal point of the space.**  
Walls in Dead Salmon, Farrow & Ball. Bespoke ottoman, Claire Garner Design Studio. Source a similar French antique black table lamp at Vinterior. Sofas, Neptune. Console table, William Yeoward







## BEDROOM

Antiques bring the rich texture of wood into this neutral space while black details anchor the scheme.

Bed, vintage Laura Ashley. Carpet, Sandringham Carpets. Bed linen, John Lewis. Table lamp, Claire Garner Design Studio, with lampshade by Nikuku

were trees creeping in through the back doors and plants growing in the bath tub,' says Kate. 'I never expected James to be enthusiastic about a house that needed so much work but he was more excited than I was.'

It was at their second viewing that the pair realised they had competition. 'There was plenty of interest, mainly from developers,' says

Kate. 'The sale went to sealed bids but we wrote to the sellers and told them how much we loved the house and that we were a family with two teenagers at school close by.' The prospect of having a new family in the house appealed to the sellers and Kate and James won the bid.

With such a lot of work to be done, the family, along with their springer spaniel, rented

'We changed very little at the front of the house as we are in a conservation area'



#### LANDING

**A neutral palette and simple blinds ensure that Kate's antique furnishings draw focus.**

Existing armchair reupholstered in Oswin fabric in Charcoal, Romo. Blinds in Doyu Stucco fabric, Villa Nova.

Mini bracket wall light in bronze, Hector Finch, with lampshade, Jim Lawrence



another property nearby for six months. During this time Kate enlisted Claire Garner Design Studio who provided interior design advice and also recommended a reliable builder they had worked with previously.

'We started by stripping out all the walls from the first floor but we changed very little at the front of the house as it's in a conservation area, although we did receive planning permission to change the front porch,' explains Kate. 'We also decided to add a full second floor where there had been a mezzanine level, we

repositioned the windows, changed the floor plan and renewed all the wiring and plumbing.'

A pale grey kitchen provided much of the ground floor palette while tumbled limestone flags throughout add authentic period character. In the sitting room, deep pink walls bring a warm feel, in addition to the new log burner.

'I'm not into bold colours, so mostly I wanted it to be light, bright and neutral,' says Kate.

Tackling the garden is next, but for now, the family are enjoying the fruits of their labour. 25

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## BATHROOM

**Twin wall lights add a luxurious note while the vanity unit provides plenty of storage.**

Walls in All White, Farrow & Ball. Chichester vanity unit, Neptune. Blind in fabric in Smoke, Warwick. Brunswick wall light, Neptune. Basket, Claire Garner Design Studio