

Complete guide to Renovating

Inspiration and practical advice for owners of older properties



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News this month...

Keeping traditions alive

When there are so many tradespeople pitching for your business, a well regarded qualification can help you to distinguish between them. There are, for example, currently just 12 people in the country that have been awarded the British NVQ 3 Heritage Skills, administered by the national Heritage Training Group. Four of these are new additions to the number. They represent specialist decorating company Devereux Decorators (01858 540 011, devereux-decorators.co.uk), which has worked on renovation projects including the Master's quarters at Jesus College, Cambridge, as well as private homes.

A year in the making

We've highlighted Earthborn's interior paints on our pages before, so we were interested to hear that the environmentally friendly company was launching a new range of wood stains suitable for outdoors. It has spent the last year working on the formulation, which is both oil and acrylic free. By allowing timber to breathe, it helps avoid damp. There are 12 colours to choose from, including bright as well as traditional shades. For a colour card, call 01928 734 171 or click on earthbornpaints.co.uk.

Keep track of maintenance tasks using a homemade checklist

CERI JAMES, EDITOR

Enlightened thinking

Owners of properties with slate roofs in need of repair may be interested to learn about Solar Slate. This innovative photovoltaic product has been developed with similar properties to traditional roofing slates. Unlike standard solar panels, they blend in exceptionally well with normal roof slates, so are well suited to historic buildings. So convincing are they, that past projects have included a Grade II listed barn conversion in Wiltshire. They also qualify for the Feed-in-Tariff scheme, a government backed renewable electricity incentive which pays householders who generate their own electricity from renewable or low carbon sources. For more on this story, call 01454 627 841 or visit solarslate-td.com.



Old meets new

We all take care to select just the right finishing touches for inside our homes, so why not its exterior too? The right guttering, for example, is not only essential to good building maintenance, but it can bring authenticity and character to a property as well. One specialist, Yeoman Rainguard, has helped restore many of the country's landmark buildings to their former glory. The company's skilled craftsmen are able to exactly match existing systems using original pieces as a pattern or, if clients prefer, they can start from scratch. Its GRP Rainwater System is particularly suitable as a replacement for original cast iron. For advice, call 01132 795 854 or go to rainguard.co.uk.

Clever solutions

If adding central heating looks likely to cause complications for your project, there are other options. You might consider an electric water-filled radiator available from a company such as Easy Heat (01422 231 943, easy-heat.co.uk). Wall mounted in the same way as conventional central heating radiators, they plug into standard 13 amp sockets. Inside, each one contains an individual boiler and pump. Particularly if yours is a rural renovation with no access to mains gas, these may provide the solution.

