

# REAL HOMES

OCTOBER 2011 £3.40

Inspiration, style & expert advice

## LOFT CONVERSIONS

Turn wasted space into your dream space!

### REAL ROOM IDEAS!

32 KITCHENS  
43 BATHROOMS  
17 LIVING ROOMS  
46 BEDROOMS

### COVER STORY

'We combined two derelict barns to create our perfect home'

### EASY UPDATES

Luxury kitchen appliances  
New looks for bathroom walls

### BIG IDEAS FOR SMALL HOUSES

Best advice from architectural designer Hugo Tugman

## Dream projects

- Grade II-listed RENOVATION
- Victorian school CONVERSION
- 1930s side EXTENSION project



realhomesmagazine.co.uk

YOUR HEATING HEALTH CHECK  
Don't get caught out this autumn  
see page 39 now!

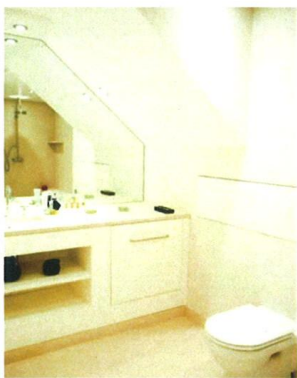




**Left** A visually lightweight staircase suspended on fine steel wires allows the light and space to flow beneath and through it, making everything feel bigger. The original staircase was dangerously steep and created a block across the centre of this small house



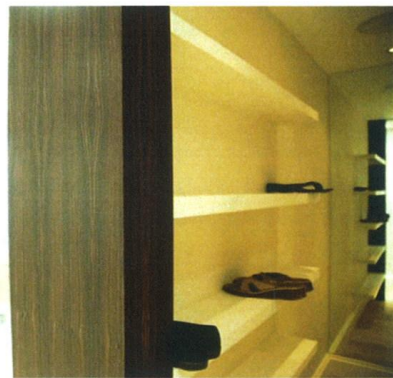
**Right** In this flat's master bedroom, a dressing room and access to the en suite shower are concealed behind a large timber headboard



**Left** Opening up the under-stair cupboard into a workable space enabled the owners of this flat to create a bigger bathroom with built-in storage



**Right** Storage has been created by building shelving into the rear of a large headboard used to divide a bedroom and form a dressing room



# BIG IDEAS FOR

If extending your home isn't an option, architectural designer **Hugo Tugman**



The costs associated with moving house and the price of property are some of the reasons why many homeowners are deciding to stay put in their homes. Instead of moving, they're exploring ways to make

their existing space work better for them. The good news is that there are plenty of ways that space, light and storage can help make the most of small houses.

## Use the available space

There are two principle methods for making the most of any room.

Firstly, access any spaces that can be better used. For example, there may be

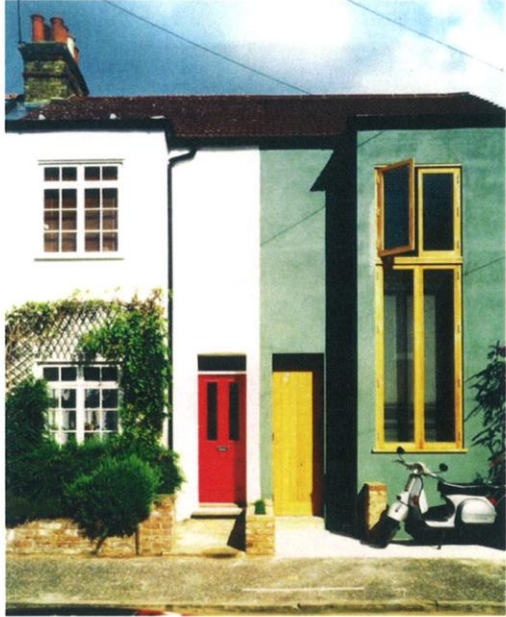
opportunities to extend into corridors, hallways, under-stair spaces, porches, lobbies and alcoves. Think about where they are positioned in your home and how they could be re-worked to make the maximum contribution to a room. Very often, the removal of internal walls will bring previously redundant spaces into use.

An under-stair cupboard can provide extra space if a staircase is redesigned to allow for an open-plan area beneath it that can form part of the living space. It can be zoned off to house an office, or be used as open storage, such as bookcases. Changing a staircase can cost as little as £2,000-£3,000, including installation. However, taking into account the likely knock-on work that may be involved, including moving radiators and re-doing your flooring, it's

a good idea to budget an amount between £5,000 and £6,000.

You may be able to create an en suite in a bedroom by reclaiming space from an airing cupboard, which you can do by replacing a copper tank with a combi boiler that's relocated to the kitchen (turn to page 39 for Jennifer Newton's advice on boilers, and see page 98 for Michael Holmes' expert advice on 'What to Consider Before Installing an En Suite'). Hotels sometimes use a giant headboard as a wall between a bed and an en suite. The bed backs on to the headboard and the en suite is tucked discreetly behind it.

Another technique for making the most of available room is 'overlapping space'. In a house with a separate kitchen, dining room and sitting room, with walls and doors



**Above** The bay in this south-facing terraced house was redesigned with one very tall window, which allows daylight to enter the ground floor space from a very high angle so that it reaches deep into the centre of the house

**Right** Removing a section of the floor of this small split-level flat, situated on a ground floor and basement, has made it feel spacious by creating a double-height area. This allows daylight to filter into the lower level and makes it possible to see each space from more than one point of view



# SMALL HOUSES

has some ideas and solutions for how to maximise your existing space

dividing them, each function is confined and defined within four walls. Open up the spaces by partially or entirely removing the dividing walls so that the kitchen can be extended into the dining area, with an elongated worktop and cupboard units. The dining area will be larger having gained floor space from the kitchen and will be able to accommodate a bigger table and more chairs – both spaces are larger but with no additional sq ft.

## Integrate suitable lighting

The most common mistake that people make when choosing lighting is to think more about the appearance of the light fitting than the effect of the lighting. Quality of light varies with different forms of artificial lighting, so you need

to consider the purpose for which you need the lighting before making your choice. For example, a compact fluorescent lamp will provide a good, even light that's perfect for a clean effect. A halogen down-spot will give focus, warmth and a softer quality of light, ideal for areas where you entertain.

Consider how you bring daylight into your home – simply using as much glass as possible can backfire. Sunlight can sometimes overpower a room – I have seen plenty of glass roofs that have required complex blind systems to shield the space beneath from the glare of the sun.

The intensity of daylight varies throughout the day. If you can imagine a bright but evenly overcast day, the most intense daylight will be coming down vertically from above with the least

intensity emitting from the horizons. It is therefore not surprising that daylight coming from a roof window has a different quality from that entering through an ordinary window in an external wall. Similarly, the top of a window is generally the most important area for bringing light into a room, so consider how you dress a window as the heavy or elaborate cloth pelmets used to conceal curtain rails can restrict natural light (read Julia Kendall's 'Design Inspiration for All your Windows' in the September issue of *Real Homes*).

In a terraced house, think about drawing daylight downward from the roof through a stairwell to the heart of the ground floor. Positioning roof windows as near to the main part of the house as possible can help to draw daylight deep into the centre of it. ▶