



Bedroom The Fired Earth tiles near the bay window disguise a patch of concrete where the original floorboards ended. 'Tiling saved us the cost of excavating down to add new floorboards and it's become a nice feature,' says John. A local carpenter built the cupboards in the style of Georgian cabinetry – a nod to the fact that the basement was once the working part of a grand house



Bathroom Partly inspired by a stay at the Waldorf Astoria hotel in London, this room features a mix of traditional, white, crackle-glazed metro tiles and large, grey slate tiles that are normally used outdoors. The flooring is from London Mosaic **Stockist details on p182**



SECRET ADDRESS BOOK

Rume

This is a fabulous shop full of interesting home pieces, with an original range of soft furnishings. It's where we found the Timorous Beasties cushions for our sofa. *54 Western Road, Hove BN3 (rume.co.uk)*

Jeremy Sanders

He's a local artist producing pieces of art from his studio under the arches near Brighton's Palace Pier. We have some of his work hanging above our dining table. *Palace Pier, Brighton BN2 (jeremysanders.co.uk)*

Florian

As well as an amazing selection of plants and flowers, this florist sells homewares that the shop's owners pick up on their travels. *30 Western Road, Hove BN3 (flowers-brighton-hove.co.uk)* **10**



Kitchen The cabinets by German brand Leicht have a high-gloss finish that matches the colour of the walls for a seamless look. A sleek island separates the kitchen from the living area, providing extra storage space for both rooms. **Stockist details on p182**



DESIGN DETAILS RENOVATING A LISTED PROPERTY

It is a criminal offence to carry out renovations to a listed building without permission, so it's best to speak to the local authority in advance of any work. Our property required listed-building consent (Grade I), planning permission and building control regulations approval. We met with a senior member of the local authority's heritage department before we purchased the apartment in order to ascertain whether the broad outline of our ideas and plans was likely to meet with approval.

Prepare for the unexpected. During the initial phase of demolition, we unearthed a pillar that partially supports the five floors above our apartment. The cost of removing it was prohibitive, so we've made a feature of it by boxing it in and adding a cornice. We also discovered two separate water supplies that lead into the property, as well as a pigeon skeleton in the sealed fireplace and an old rifle stashed in the disused coal vault.

Compromise is essential. The heritage department has the final say in every aspect of the design of a listed property, and working with it in a proactive way is key to the success of the whole process. As with any leasehold apartment (even if you have a share of the freehold), remember to involve the landlord from

the start. Check the details of your freehold agreement and be prepared for a neighbour to object.

We had to apply for separate listed-building consent to waterproof the old coal sheds outside and prove that the tanking worked properly with the traditional stone used in the building. It took prolonged negotiations and many assurances from system manufacturers for us to gain approval. We also had to reinstate specific styles of internal doors, the kind that would originally have been found at basement level when the property was one large house. Our builder found these at an architectural salvage yard in Lewes. The oversized skirting boards, which are typical of 19th-century Georgian houses, are also a listed requirement.

Employing an architectural firm was money well spent (about five per cent of the project's total cost), as the architects provided the services of structural engineers and introduced us to our brilliant builder.

We managed to obtain permission to add the wonderful French doors that open out onto the terrace, making the outdoor area feel like an extension of the living space. We go inside and outside constantly – as do the dogs. ▶





Dining area Behind the glass-topped table and beechwood chairs by Calligaris sits one of the couple's custom-designed cast-iron radiators, made by Castrads. 'They're among the most successful elements of the project,' says John. 'Everything was bespoke and they were made and delivered in just one week.' **Stockist details on p182**



Remaking the Grade

This seafront home in Hove, East Sussex, is an elegant lesson in how to renovate a listed property for 21st-century living

Words **TALIB CHOUDHRY** Photography **FIONA WALKER-ARNOTT** Styling **HANNAH BORT**

A PERIOD PROPERTY with original features is high on the wish list for many house hunters. John Harwood, a cabin services director for British Airways, and his partner Simon Livingstone, who runs pet care company Toto, searched for two years before finding this basement flat in a 180-year-old building with Grade I-listed status. They bought the seafront apartment in Hove, East Sussex, in 2012, knowing that they would need planning permission to update it. The renovations took almost two years to complete.

'We wanted to buy in the Brunswick Estate, as it has some of the finest Regency architecture in the country,' John recalls, 'but we also needed a generous outdoor space for our dogs, West Highland terriers Holly and Hamish and labrador retriever Burbs. It was difficult to find both things in such a narrow search area.'

Brighton-based Arch Angels Architects and Ark Builders collaborated with the

couple to create this modern home within the strict limitations of its listed status. 'We've reinstated as many of the original features as possible while adding more space and light,' says John.

The main living area is open plan and balances period charm with a calm, contemporary style. A subtle palette made up of shades of grey visually divides zones for relaxing, cooking and dining.

Good amounts of storage and a ruthless attitude to clutter are key to maintaining the sleek aesthetic. The only decorative flourishes are artworks, which are rotated frequently to keep the rooms looking fresh. The couple buy pieces locally, but also on their regular trips to Thailand, where John spent much of his childhood. 'We try to recreate the style of places where we've felt at home,' says John. 'After complying with planning regulations so closely, it's nice to be able to throw out the rule book.'



Living area The plush, grey corner sofa, which is from Camerich on London's King's Road, is brightened up with striking linen cushions by Timorous Beasties. The painting of Brighton's Royal Pavilion is by local artist Bonny Cummins
Portrait Homeowners John and Simon with one of their West Highland terriers
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