



TWICE AS NICE

Wendy Needham and Julian Curtis made their country cottage even more enchanting by doubling its size

FEATURE VICTORIA JENKINS | PHOTOGRAPHY WILLIAM GODDARD



SITTING ROOM

This newly created room blends in seamlessly with the rest of the cottage.
Churchill's sofa, from £2,310, Timeless Chesterfields.
Moss knit throw, £69, Marks & Spencer, is similar



DINING ROOM
Julian made the pine settle and window seats. Elm and beech chairs, £40 each, Upstairs Downstairs

REPLANNED



HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY

Extended 1720s detached cottage

LOCATION Gloucestershire

ROOMS Sitting room, dining room, kitchen, utility room, three bedrooms (two en suite)

PURCHASED 2001

PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'This is our first home together,' says Wendy.

SITTING ROOM

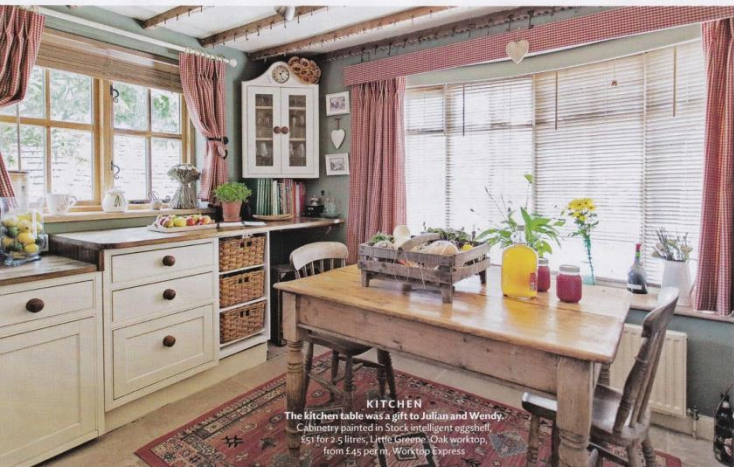
The inglenook fireplace is made from reclaimed stone and timbers.

Tapestry fabric, £20m, Painswick Fabrics





MASTER BEDROOM
The 'old' plasterwork was created around the original chimney. Brass bed, £110, eBay. Claudia green quilted bedspread, from £65, Forever England



KITCHEN

The kitchen table was a gift to Julian and Wendy. Cabinetry painted in Stock intelligent eggshell, £51 for 2.5 litres, Little Greene. Oak worktop, from £45 per m, Worktop Express

Wendy Needham and Julian Curtis had great trouble finding their little cottage when they first went to view it, in 2001. 'It was up a steep single track with a "Not suitable for vehicles" sign at the bottom,' says Wendy. When the couple eventually found the 300-year-old property with its 1970s extension, they were seduced by its age and secluded location. Although it was smaller than they ideally wanted, they bought it with a view to restoring its traditional charm.

Soon after, work got underway and one of the first jobs for Julian, who has his own joinery and carpentry business, Appletree Interiors, was to tear down plastered archways to reveal original beams. An

open-plan staircase was closed in and the handrails replaced with ones in an authentic style. Rooms were painted in period colours and then Julian gutted the 1970s-style kitchen and installed Shaker units.

'When all the work was done, the pair lived happily in the cottage for over a decade. 'We loved our little cottage, but it was no longer quite big enough,' says Wendy. 'Julian's daughter Alana, now 21, was growing out of her bedroom and we needed office space and a dining room so that we could entertain more than two people at a time.'

Luckily, Wendy inherited some money in 2012, so they were able to design and submit plans for an extension almost double the size of the cottage itself, using as much reclaimed material as possible. 'It



FAVOURITE ROOM
'Our new bedroom is so calming and has beautiful views – we could almost live in there permanently!'



MASTER EN SUITE
 (left) Handmade doors and a chequered floor add character. Polished marble black and white tiles, £75sq m, Topps Tiles, have a similar look



GUEST BEDROOM
 Julian's Gothic mirror set the tone here. Chic double duvet cover, £379, Yves Delorme, is a close match

wasn't completely smooth sailing,' says Wendy. 'We had objections from the neighbours, constant rain while digging our foundations and a few problems trying to keep a traditional renovation in line with modern building regulations.' Because of the limited access it was also an adventure bringing 65 tons of concrete up a small lane in a dumper truck and removing 120 tons of soil in a transit van.

With the help of his brother Linden, Julian dug the foundations, and with a friend, constructed the exterior walls and roof. He then went on to build or install everything from the internal walls and flooring to the wiring and the windows. With the aim of creating a home that was sympathetic to the age of the original building, he chose

all the internal pine ledges, brace doors and beams from salvage yards. Each of the lintels is made of reclaimed oak, and Julian laid the bedroom floor in old scaffolding boards. 'He has a knack for making new things look timeworn,' says Wendy. 'The stone we've used in the house is reclaimed, and after repointing the old part of the cottage as well as the new, the blend is remarkable. I've also got the inglenook I've always wanted, made of reclaimed stone and timbers.'

Now that the work is complete, the extra space has transformed the couple's lives. 'I think that what I feel so proud of, and what all of our visitors comment on, is Julian's attention to detail,' says Wendy. 'That's what makes the whole house special.' 🏡