



PAST, PRESENT & FUTURE

An old garage in the grounds of a historic home has been refurbished to create wonderfully characterful guest accommodation

WORDS AMBER BEARD PHOTOGRAPHY CHRISTINE TAYLOR



LIVING AREA
Velvet chairs from Andrew Martin and a Made sofa bring the colour scheme to life
KITCHEN/DINER
Practical rubber flooring, orange Habitat chairs and a striking Pooky pendant combine with vibrant green walls for a bold look

When Liz and Mike Wilson bought Padmore House in Whippingham on the Isle of Wight in 2010, the former garage next door, which had been turned into a cottage, was in a very sad state. Records for Padmore House go back to 1640, but one of its most famous occupants lived there in the early 20th century.

Sam Saunders was an aviation pioneer who developed the 'Bat' boat, one of the first flying boats in Britain, and he is said to have built a car in the garage. The cottage came up for sale a few years after Liz and Mike bought the main house and they decided to buy it.

'It was originally part of the estate and we knew that, historically, it was one of the buildings that would have serviced Padmore House. Initially, we had no idea what we were going to do with it,' remembers Liz. 'We had all sorts of ideas, and decided to get an architectural practice, Hynes-Laitt Studio, involved to see what was possible.' After two years of discussions with them, Liz and Mike made the decision that creating holiday accommodation would be the best option.

Architect Beth Hynes-Laitt suggested ▶





refurbishing the original building to try to preserve as much of the old section as possible, leaving the original walls but replacing the interior with a more functional and modern arrangement.

Beth suggested incorporating a glazed link to a new extension, with an eye to creating the 'in the garden' feeling that Liz and Mike were so keen to continue, given the plot's history as a market garden for the village. 'For me, it's always been about bringing the property back to what it should be, using the land properly and having something that sits in it comfortably,' says Liz.

'We had never built anything from scratch, and while our hearts are in old things, it was exciting to do something that felt newer and cleaner! We were naive and did make mistakes once the builders were on site, but we always had the idea that what we ended up with would be high-end and somewhere we would want to spend time in ourselves.'

The project was not without its dramas and, several times, building works ground to a halt as issues were ironed out. What should have been a nine-month build stretched into two years. One of the major problems was the floor in the former garage. 'It was laid with beautiful clay tiles and we wanted to keep

'We'd never built anything from scratch, so it was exciting to do something that felt new and clean'

them, so we tried all sorts of ways of sealing it. However, when diggers went in to take out the internal walls and strip everything out, they drove over the floor, which then sank into a massive hole. So in the end, we took the floor out and replaced it with concrete.'

The internal walls have shadow gaps at the tops and are staggered to give a smart, contemporary appearance that contrasts with the building's exterior walls.

The original part of the building now houses five beautifully decorated bedrooms, each with its own exit through garage-style doors onto the courtyard. With wallpaper

from Morris & Co, Cole & Son and Abigail Borg, and fabrics from Sanderson, Clarke & Clarke, Thibaut and Spira of Sweden, the rooms are luxurious yet seem completely natural in the setting. Attention has been paid to the finishing touches too, with velvet upholstered beds and chairs to match, all adding to the boutique hotel feel. In the loft, four further beds make a perfect kids hideaway. 'This has a really great ambience with its deliberate mixture of old and new; we wanted it to reflect all the different lives the building had had.'

Thanks to a glass link to the new part of the property, the house flows well, all brought together by Liz's stylish eye. The long, low building houses an open-plan kitchen and dining room, a sitting area, kid's TV room and utility – all in a mix of Scandi and modern British design. 'It's great to go on holiday with lots of people but you've got to have space for everyone to be able to do their own thing and get away from each other. So that's why we designed this part of the house the way we have; people who like to cook have a great space, there's plenty of room for teenagers to go and watch TV and there's the garden and patio for adults and toddlers alike.'

The kitchen worktops and splashback are

all Vlade enamel from local Isle of Wight company AJ Wells & Son, as are the back plates behind the televisions in the living room and snug and the Charnwood woodburner. The flooring throughout the dining area is industrial rubber tiling for practical reasons as well as design ones and the fridge, dishwashers and the cooker are all high spec too. Stylish pieces from Andrew Martin, Made, Sofa.com and Habitat fill the house with character, while lighting from Pooky, Original BTC and Old School Electrical maintain the interior's luxurious feel. The punchy Abigail Borg wallpaper in the kitchen shows off Liz's love of the quirky and is paired with bold hues.

The former garage, renamed The Long House, is now a luxurious and atmospheric space that feels special while also making you feel very much at home. Liz and Mike have firmly put their design stamp on what was an ambitious project to not only preserve some of the building's fascinating history but also create a new and complementary contrast that will last into the future. 'It was quite an experience,' says Liz, 'But we've learned a lot along the way and we now have this amazing space to share.'

To stay at The Long House, Padmore, visit thelonghousepadmore.co.uk



ORANGE BEDROOM
Bold patterns, such as Abigail Borg's Orange Fox (pictured with yellow chair) and Mr Chrysanth (opposite) wallpapers, combine to create a dynamic and unique look, while custom Crittall-style glazing (top right) by Fabco echo the building's original windows – though with a colourful twist. The velvet bed from Sofa.com and bedside tables add a luxury feel

BATHROOM
Pretty pink details marry beautifully with a traditional sink and green tiles

EXTERIOR GATE
Blending old with new, the entrance to the property is cast through the property's historic cast iron gate

BLUE BEDROOM
Flamboyant patterns in the wallpaper, rug and curtains contrast with the navy-hued four-poster and side tables

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