



RIGHT: The new kitchen extension on the right is where a Renka rooflight was installed. Jane also chose a 'wall' of three sliding glass doors, also from Renka, to open out onto the garden



A Bath stone barnstormer

A move from the centre of Bath led the Joneses to their dream home in the countryside

WORDS: Victoria Jenkins ♦ PHOTOS: William Goddard

Jane and Simon Jones and their two sons Harry and Charlie had been living in the centre of Bath, but decided to try life in the countryside. After selling up they rented a place in a tiny village – “and then we fell in love with the area,” says Jane, a freelance marketing consultant. “It was so scenic and quiet.”

So, when an old converted barn came up for sale, the Joneses jumped at the chance, especially as there were amazing views from some of the windows.

“It’s about 100 years old, built of Bath stone, and was converted in 1986 into a four-bedroom dwelling,” says Jane. “We moved into it in 2011.”

However, the small kitchen was dark and dingy – “it let the rest of the house down” – and there was a ramshackle lean-to conservatory attached to it, separated by a very thick wall and tiny opening. “The kitchen was so small you couldn’t see much of the view anyway,” says Jane. “But we always knew that one day we would be adding an extension to make a larger kitchen.”

However, in the interim they made several smaller changes – they replaced some rotten exterior tongue and grooving with red cedar cladding, then repainted all the dark green window frames in cream to tone in with the Bath stone.

“The barn interior also needed updating,” says Jane. “So, over the years we replaced the flooring with French oak, redecorated, put a new bannister and spindles on the staircase, and refitted the bathroom, two shower rooms and the downstairs cloakroom.”

The Joneses had the bookcases built by a carpenter (since retired), and the French oak flooring is new

The new wooden kitchen is bespoke from Sustainable Kitchens and painted in 'Railings' by Farrow & Ball with 'Dovetail' on the island. The flooring is made of limestone tiles from Boniti of Bath



Jane in the kitchen

‘They found out that if you live next to a Duchy of Cornwall farm, it takes quite some effort to get the planners to agree’



Renka sliding glass doors were put in to maximise the view. Between them, Jane and the builder moved a lot of earth with a mini digger to landscape the garden, which had a distinct slope

Then 18 months ago the couple asked architect Elke Dittrich for advice on extending the kitchen.

And this is when they found out that, if you live next to a Duchy of Cornwall farm, in a particularly pretty village full of listed properties, it takes quite some effort to get the planners to agree. Especially if you're in both Conservation and Green Belt areas as well.

However, Elke succeeded, and it took just three months to get planning permission, and five months to build the extension. "Although in theory it fell within permitted development, that right had been removed when the barn was converted," says Jane. "Our conservation area is deemed a heritage asset, so our extension had to make a positive contribution to the local character of our area."

But now the conservatory has been demolished and a 20 square metre



ABOVE: The couple put in the Stovax wood burner which heats a boiler, and this supplies the radiators on this side of the house

BELOW: The grey sofa is from Sofa Workshop, and the red one from Laura Ashley



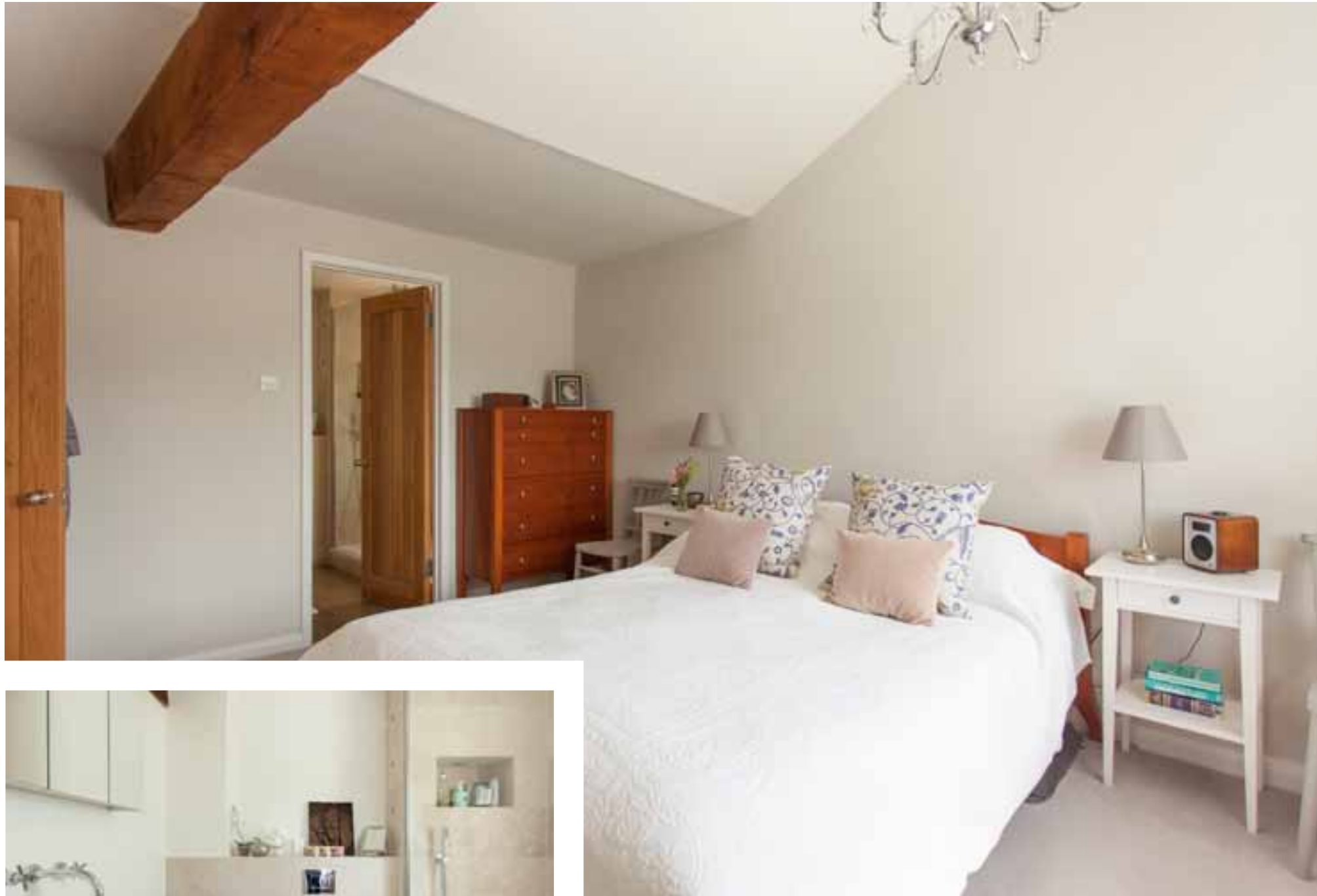
single-storey extension built in its place, on a slightly larger footprint. “That conservatory was old and decrepit, boiling hot in summer and so cold in winter we could use it as a fridge,” says Jane. “We told Elke we wanted to make the most of the views.”

The thick wall between kitchen and conservatory was almost completely removed and two RSJs bolted together were installed in the ceiling. Now old kitchen and new extension have been combined to make one big family room although the larder remained in the same place. “It has an airbrick leading to the outside so was keeping everything inside nice and cool,” says Jane. “I didn’t want to lose that.”

A floor of limestone tiles was laid and a Renka rooflight installed then Jane chose a “wall” of sliding glass doors, also from Renka, to open out onto the newly-landscaped garden. “I didn’t want bifolds as they tend to have heavy frames which would obscure the view,” she says. “I spotted Renka when I went to a Home Building exhibition at the NEC Centre in Birmingham.” They also had double doors knocked into the wall (formerly an exterior side wall) between kitchen and dining room.



The sitting room is L-shaped which makes it feel more spacious. The Knoll sofa has been in the family for years and went with them to Australia and back



Then new wood units from Sustainable Kitchens of Bristol were fitted along with Arenastone Bianco Concretto worktops.

“I chose Sustainable Kitchens because they’re local and they build their kitchens on site,” says Jane. “There had been a rather shabby green Aga left behind so we traded it in for a reconditioned one in pewter. With that and the new wood burner in the sitting room, we hardly need the central heating on.”

There had been original pine beams crossing the kitchen ceiling which at first the Joneses thought they would keep. But eventually they had them covered over with plasterboard as they looked out of place.

“Opening up the kitchen to make the most of the view has transformed the way we live,” says Jane. “Whatever the weather, the room is a joy to be in and we feel very lucky to have such a lovely space in which to cook, eat, entertain and relax.” ♦



ABOVE: The bed in the main bedroom is from the Conran Shop

CENTRE LEFT: The couple found the wash stand on the internet and put a marble top on it. The stone tiles are from Mandarin Stone, and the shower from Matki

LEFT: The Joneses replaced some rotten exterior tongue and grooving with red cedar which soon weathered to an attractive silver grey

BELOW: The summer house was already there, so the Joneses painted it in a sage green and put in the steps

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- Renka:** 0121 333 4665, renka.co.uk
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- Stelrad:** 0844 543 6200,
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- Stovax:** stovax.com