

Publication name: Suffolk magazine
Headline: Converting and extending –
Tips on renovating your home.

Publication date: April 2008

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Renovating your property can be a fantastic way to gain extra space, make better use of the space available or add some WOW factor. However, renovating your home can be time consuming, stressful and mistakes can be expensive. Roger Connolly of Architect Your Home Suffolk answers readers questions on renovating their home, to help you avoid the costly pitfalls.

I want to convert my loft but don't know where to start.

I would start by getting some expert advice to find out if your loft can be converted or not. Use the expertise of an architect or a loft conversion company to find out whether your loft is suitable for conversion and help you to find the

best design solutions to meet your needs and budget. As a rule of thumb if you have 2 metres of free space from the foot of the ridge board to the ceiling joist the loft space is suitable. Period houses dating back to the 19th century are particularly good for loft conversions because they tend to have lots of room beneath the roof.

You will then need to think about how the new room connects to the rest of the house. The choice of staircase can be a grand statement or a simple transition depending on the style of the house and the available space.



We moved into our new home knowing that we would need to extend the kitchen as we would like an open plan kitchen dining area. We would like the extension to feel more connected to the garden as it's south facing and will be fantastic in the summer. Any ideas?

There are a number of ways that you can make your extension feel as though it flows into the garden. One solution would be to use bi-fold sliding doors which

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completely open-up the back of the house. The use of the same flooring can be a clever trick to make the room

false economy and trying to bring these trades together yourself can result in the project over-running and subsequently being more costly.

appear as though it seamlessly flows into the garden. Be careful though about how much glass you use in an extension as too much south facing glazing will cause the room to overheat. As an alternative use bi-fold windows which do not require as much glass. Adding glass to your property can be problematic you will need to comply with part L of the building regulations (this limits the proportion of glass in a structure to approx 25%) However you can have more glass if you increase insulation in other areas or choose a high spec product, such as a low E-glass or triple glazing.

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We have just got planning permission for a double storey extension for my house in Newmarket. We have an electrician friend and have been recommended a plasterer so we have that part covered. We just need to find a builder! I'm a little nervous about managing all of these trades people do you have any advice?

Having building works undertaken, whether it involves a double storey extension such as yours or smaller renovations all involve an array of different trades. From bricklayers to plasterers, electricians to plumbers, they all have a part to play. I would advise taking on a main building contractor to oversee the project rather than engage separate trades people or sub-contractors directly yourself. Using a friend can be problematic and people often think they will be able to get a better deal if they negotiate these arrangements themselves and avoid the contractors percentage on top. However this can be a