

# 25 BEAUTIFUL HOMES

## A WARM WELCOME

Cosy thatched cottage | Stylish school conversion | Chic Art Deco flat

### A HOME FOR ENTERTAINING

'We saw this former rectory and knew it was the one'

### INSPIRED IDEAS

Transforming a barn  
Creating statement walls

### FROM FLATS TO A FAMILY HOUSE

'Hygge sums up that festive feeling'

## NEW YEAR, NEW LOOKS

DECORATING WITH COLOUR AND PATTERN



RECALL 3/1/18

# Insight

## CREATIVE WAYS TO CONVERT A BARN

*Fancy living in a home like Cathy Dean's? Here's how to transform a barn successfully*

Converting a barn lets you create a home far larger than a typical family house. You can have dramatic double-height living spaces, quirky features such as galleried landings, plus more private spaces for bedrooms and snugs. Barn conversions also offer scope for using innovative building materials and the freedom to invent a unique space.

### Planning your project

Thanks to changes in government legislation in 2015, agricultural buildings permitted to be converted for residential use now include Dutch and pole barns, as well as timber, brick and stone constructions. To find a barn to convert, check with your local authority if planning permission has been granted for barns in your area. Contact estate agents and search specialist websites, such as barnsetc.co.uk and plotfinder.net. Once you have found a suitable building, appoint a project manager. If your building experience is limited, hire

an architect to oversee the conversion. An experienced architect will produce a design that is likely to be approved and can help you plan a realistic budget.

### Design for living

A barn conversion lets you create flexible layouts to suit your lifestyle, but the most successful designs embrace the barn's essential character while maximising the potential for double-height, open-plan living spaces. Certain design factors need to be considered, however, especially windows and lighting, as these can present challenges. Barns usually have huge openings, originally designed for farm carts, or small openings (for ventilation), so some rooms will be darker than others. Design solutions include installing floor-to-ceiling windows, along with rooflights and glazed gable ends. Insulation is also key, as barns are not designed for residential purposes. Utilise the latest building materials and green technology to make your barn warm and cosy in winter.



### PROFESSIONAL ADVICE



'Convert a barn sympathetically by retaining the principal timbers and historic roof structures of the building. Architectural embellishments, including domestic details such

as porches and hanging baskets are best avoided as these usually look out of place.

**Try to use reclaimed materials as these have the attractive patina of age. Opt for galvanised guttering instead of PVC, and install conservation-style rooflights to reflect the barn's industrial character.**

Converting a barn is a good opportunity to use new and unusual architectural features, such as circular fin radiators, which have a touch of industrial chic. Copper and brass fittings work well in rural buildings, and Corten steel can be used to introduce colour. The Japanese tradition of "shou sugi ban" (an ancient process of preserving wood by charring it) is becoming more popular as a way of bringing character to internal and external timbers.

**Strike a balance between boldness and restraint when furnishing your barn. Eclectic interiors work really well, so opt for bohemian kelims, large artworks and boldly patterned fabrics. Do exercise restraint, however, and let the spaces do the talking.'**

**GAVIN WOODFORD,**  
WOODFORD ARCHITECTURE + INTERIORS

### ADDRESS BOOK

■ **Woodford Architecture + Interiors,**  
01364 654888, [woodfordarchitecture.com](http://woodfordarchitecture.com)  
Specialists in timeless architecture and interior design

■ **Christina Dickinson Interior Design,**  
07738 256202  
Interior designer skilled in creating bespoke schemes for barn conversions

■ **Barnsetc.co.uk** Specialist website dedicated to buying and selling fully converted barns and those for conversion



Ensure your conversion is warm and well insulated



Large windows stop a barn feeling dark and dingy



A double-height ceiling creates a feeling of space



**EXPERT EYE** *'Converted barns nearly always have spacious dimensions, so smaller pieces of furniture may look out of place. Opt for generous or oversized sofas in living spaces and large beds and armoires in your bedrooms'*

**CHRISTINA DICKINSON,** INTERIOR DESIGNER