

# True *to nature*

Amanda and Terry Paul breathed life into their home with a scheme inspired by its stunning country setting

The property felt so alive when we first viewed it, we loved it instantly

AMANDA PAUL, OWNER

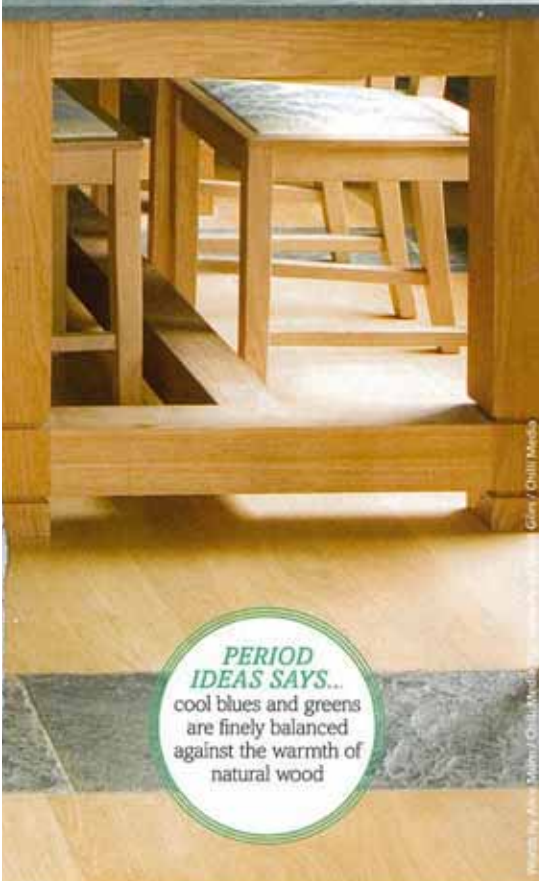


**W**e viewed this house in the spring," remembers Amanda Paul. "The owners then shared it with a great many animals and, over the years, ten children. It felt so alive and we loved it instantly." Two years after Amanda and her husband Paul has first spotted the property in an estate agent's window, and after the disappointment of several chains falling through, they moved in with their young daughter Francesca.

Amanda and Terry chose shades of blue and green from Farrow & Ball for this area to help link it to the garden. They used seven colour in total, but because they're all within the same tonal range, they work well together. Every element of the decoration from the paint to the accessories takes inspiration from the outdoors. As well as the walls, you can see additional blues and greens in the form of glassware, pottery, mosaics and flowers which add texture.

The building had unfortunately lost many of its original features, however the couple took this as their opportunity to stamp their mark on it. Amanda says, "As an artist, I've enjoyed the evolutionary process of turning this house into our home." The greatest change they made was to the layout of the ground floor where they opened up three rooms to create a large kitchen, dining and living space.

Other natural tones – this time yellows and creams – have been used for a feeling of warmth alongside a wood burning stove in the sitting room. Reclaimed oak and slate tile floors laid through the house add to the organic feel. The kitchen table, made by a local carpenter, is also topped with slate from a Cumbrian quarry. Then in the bedroom, the headboard is covered with a coir matting runner.



**PERIOD IDEAS SAYS...**  
cool blues and greens are finely balanced against the warmth of natural wood





### Amanda's Top Tips

Many of Amanda and Terry's buys have been charity shop purchases. These include the smart desk and chair in the living room, which cost just £20. Among Amanda's favourite finds are her French beaded bags, of which she build up a sizeable collection. Several years ago they cost around £1 each, but now go for around £20. Amanda says, "I gratify my shopping habit in local charity shops and then recycle my bargains by re-donating them from time to time. This way I can avoid clutter around the house and I'm always refreshing its look. It continues to evolve."

### Outside in

The house was originally built as a farmer's cottage in the 1930s and nestles on a south facing slope with views over Kent and Sussex. The river Teise runs through the bottom of the field, bought from a neighbouring farmer. On sunny days, Amanda and Terry throw open the windows and doors. Like the buildings previous owners, they too keep a number of different animals and it's not unusual to find a chicken indoors sitting comfortably on a chair. It's hard to believe that the hustle and bustle of Royal Tunbridge Wells is just five minutes away.

"Each window is a picture because our surroundings are so beautiful," says Amanda. The

couple have made a point of arranging various places throughout the house to sit and enjoy the view. The conservatory is their favourite room. "It's always so comfortably warm," Amanda explains, "and it's the perfect spot to take in the fantastic views of uninterrupted sky that we get from being situated on a hill." She describes blood orange sunrises, scudding juvenile clouds, huge thunder clouds and mellow warm sunsets. Although she says her paintings aren't a direct interpretation of what she sees around her, she finds she is constantly inspired by the moods, colours and shapes of her environment. Her studio looks out over a wheat field.





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## REAL HOMES Kentish Smallholding



### Perfect Fit

If you are renovating an old property as Amanda and Terry have done, be sure to choose fittings which enhance your building's period charm. The Old Radiator Company specialises in restoring original cast

iron radiators. With a stock of over 4,500, you'd be hard pushed to match the choice of designs, sizes and finishes it offers.

**THE OLD  
RADIATOR  
COMPANY**  
01233 850 082,  
theoldradiator  
company.co.uk



The couple's animals have made the garden around the house their own. Vegetation is constantly eaten and rearranged. "Although we grow French beans, strawberries, tomatoes and herbs in a fenced off area, the days of flower beds and landscaping are long gone, but I'm resigned to this now. Living in beautiful countryside animated by the antics of fur

and feather negates my need for flowers and shrubs," says Amanda. A pair of llamas were bought five years ago and keep the grass in the field trim. "We considered sheep, but felt they could be hard work. The llamas are gentle grazers, protective of our three chickens and great characters to have around."



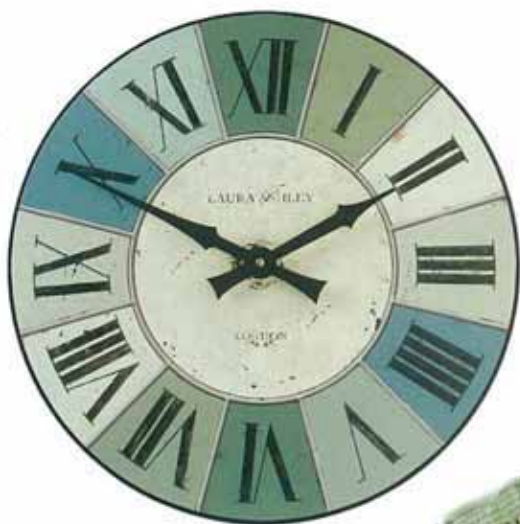
### On the surface

Good guttering is key to proper building care and if yours needs addressing now is the best time to take the job in hand. Yeoman Rainguard has over 30 years experience in supplying and fitting guttering pipers, hoppers and rainwater systems of all types for historic and listed buildings as well as newer homes. In addition to traditional cast iron, the range on offer also includes more eye catching designs. **YEOMAN RAINGUARD**  
01132 795 854, rainguard.co.uk



# get the Look

Be inspired by Amanda's country style to combine cool blue and golden wood



### ◀ Tick tock

Blue cream panel wall clock, £28, LAURA ASHLEY 0871 983 5999, lauraashley.com



### ▲ Perfect circle

Oak hanging chopping boards, £40, JOHN LEWIS 0845 604 9049, johnlewis.com



### ▲ Bowled over

Large salad / fruit bowl, £50, POLIE POTTERY 0131 455 6812, poliepottery.co.uk



### ◀ Take a seat

Carmargue chair, £144, OKA 0844 815 7380, okadirect.com



### ▲ Pretty picnic

Blue check throw, £84, JOANNA WOOD 020 7730 5064, joannawood.co.uk



### ▲ Brick by brick

Urban Nature wood coaster, £6.50, VILLEROY & BOCH villeroy-boch.com