

# PERIOD LIVING



Inspiring interiors

Stunning period homes creatively renovated with unique touches

LET IN THE LIGHT  
The best orangeries and conservatories

NEW IDEAS FOR ARTS & CRAFTS DECORATING

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We reveal her secrets and go behind the scenes

## TIMELESS LUXURY

Designer radiator brand Bisque has launched its first range of traditional towel radiators. Comprising the Buckingham, Osbourne and Balmoral models, the collection has been designed with a classic aesthetic in mind. The Victorian-style Balmoral towel radiator, shown here in chrome, £1,529, not only heats the space, but can accommodate large towels on its generous hanging rail. It features period-style ball joints and is available in a wide selection of colourways.



**DECO DESIGNS**  
Creating a decorative stained glass effect is easy with the range of window films from Purlitrot. Available in designs from different eras, including Victorian and Art Nouveau, its stained glass effects are printed onto transparent or translucent window film, which is made to measure and easy to apply. Add a splash of authentic colour to your windows and doors with the new Spinel Art Deco stained glass design, from £11.50.



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**CUBAN FLAVOUR**  
With a subtle colour palette of soft grey, blue and green, the new Havana collection from Genial Tiles upplies four unique encaustic-tiled designs that can be used on walls and floors. Featuring a neutral background with a colourful item, the tiles can be paired upside single white and grey tiles and mixed and matched among the range. Shown is the White Garden design, £49.49 per m<sup>2</sup>.



## ASK THE EXPERT



Douglas Kent, technical and research director at the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, answers your renovation queries

**Q** My 19th-century cottage is of solid wall brick construction. I have been advised that the walls should be encased internally with insulated plasterboard. I am concerned this will cause moisture to be trapped. There is no evidence of mould in the cottage, and no smell of damp. What do you suggest?

**A** You are right to be wary about installing non-breathable wall insulation in a solid walled building in the form of plasterboard with a foam backing. Research by the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB) shows that fitting insulation that is not vapour permeable increases the risk of dampness accompanied by mould, timber decay and harm to human health in older buildings constructed without cavities (which is most houses predating 1919). If wall insulation is added, the use of breathable ('vapour open') material minimises the risk of elevated moisture levels. Examples of breathable insulation used on walls internally include woodfibre, expanded cork and aerogel.

Adding insulation externally helps walls to maintain constant temperatures, thereby improving comfort levels and reducing total energy use. However, insulating internally will often be the most viable option, especially where the impact of installing external insulation is unacceptable aesthetically. Whether wall insulation is fitted internally or externally, it is advisable to implement other measures with quicker payback periods first. These include topping up loft insulation, draughtproofing windows and doors, and fitting thermostatic radiator valves.

**Q** We're looking into our home's history, but it seems to date from different eras. Is it possible to date the mortar?

**A** It is tricky to date mortar accurately. Someone with a knowledge of architectural history will frequently be able to tell the approximate age from, say, the profile of a mortar joint or its visible constituents. They can also often establish the different phases in the evolution of a building. More scientific techniques have been employed, such as radiocarbon dating, but are not always straightforward. The architecture of a building may offer better clues to its history, therefore, than the mortar.

If you have a question for Douglas, email it to [periodliving@tutstocret.com](mailto:periodliving@tutstocret.com)

PERIOD LIVING: 'NEW' BY OUR BEST TO ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS, THE EXPERTS AT PERIOD LIVING



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