

The Prides removed a dividing wall in the sitting room to create a much bigger room which meant putting in an RSJ and then had a Cotswold stone fireplace built with a reclaimed oak lintel. They made a front window much bigger to allow in light and put French doors into the back wall leading into the garden. The Bergere four-piece suite is by Multiyork and the woodburner from Knights of Marshfield. The rug was a wedding present

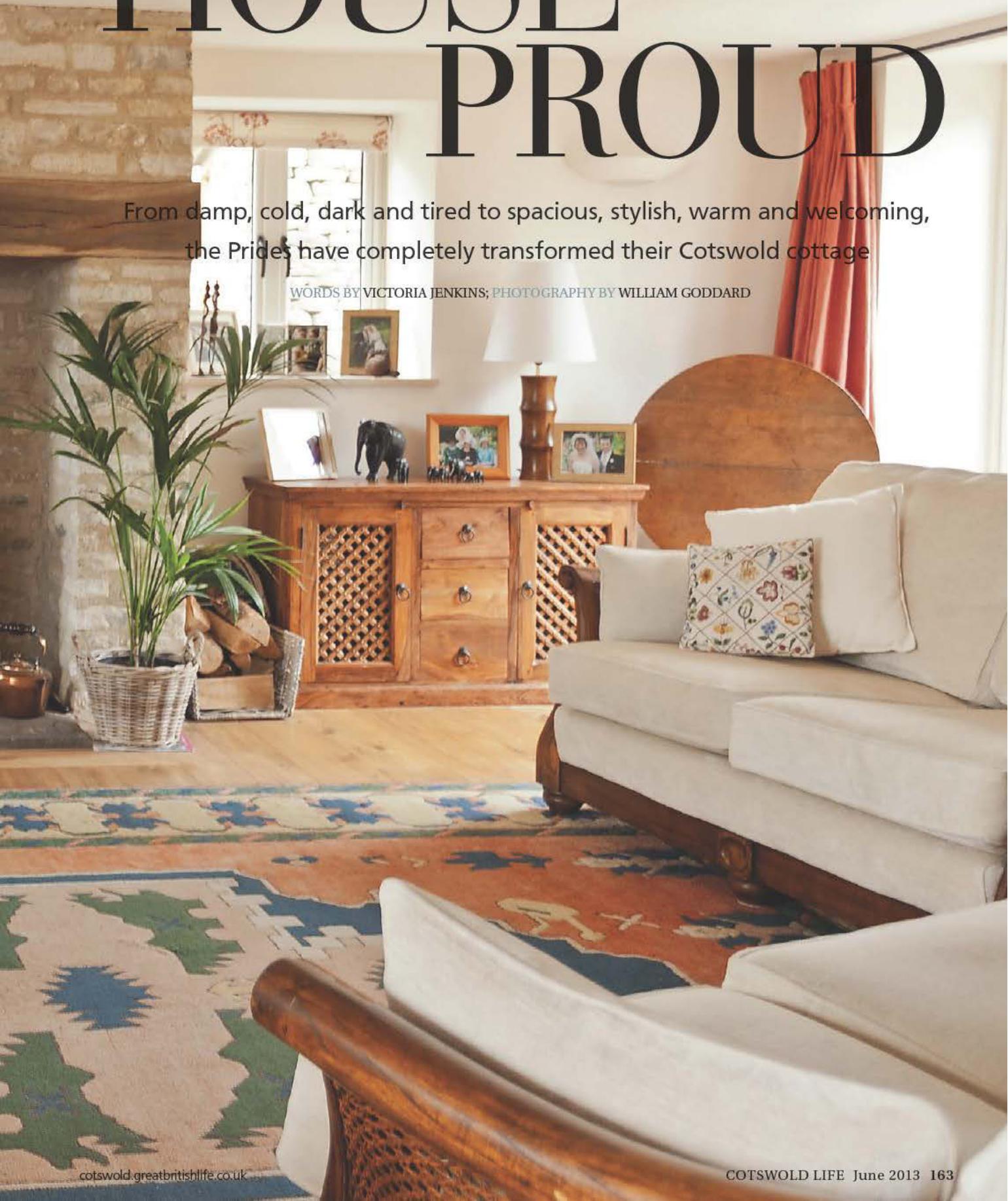




HOUSE PROUD

From damp, cold, dark and tired to spacious, stylish, warm and welcoming, the Prides have completely transformed their Cotswold cottage

WORDS BY VICTORIA JENKINS; PHOTOGRAPHY BY WILLIAM GODDARD





The handmade units from Woodchester Cabinet Makers have been hand painted in Reseda, a very soft shade of green-blue

When Veronica and Andrew Pride moved down to Gloucestershire they looked at 42 houses before deciding on one near Stroud. It was a Cotswold stone cottage and appealed because it was more spacious and had higher ceilings than the usual Cotswold cottage.

It had been built in the early 1800s if not earlier and had once been a butcher's shop then a grocer's and general stores. However after six months of living in it while planning the changes the couple realised it needed a huge amount of work to make it comfortable. Not only would they have to gut it back to the original stone walls but replace the roof too. Fortunately it wasn't listed.

"It was damp, cold, dark and tired with a 1960s kitchen and bathroom," says Andrew. "Not only were many window frames rotten but the stone window surrounds too! They all had to be replaced and the first winter we were there we froze when the inadequate gas central heating failed to work at all."

However planning permission was swiftly granted and when the builders moved in the couple moved out and into rented property. There they stayed for the next 15 months and as Veronica says, "We



In the dining room they took out a partition wall and an old 70s fireplace. The dining table and chairs are antique mahogany which Andrew bought years ago from an auction house and the sideboard is from Multiyork

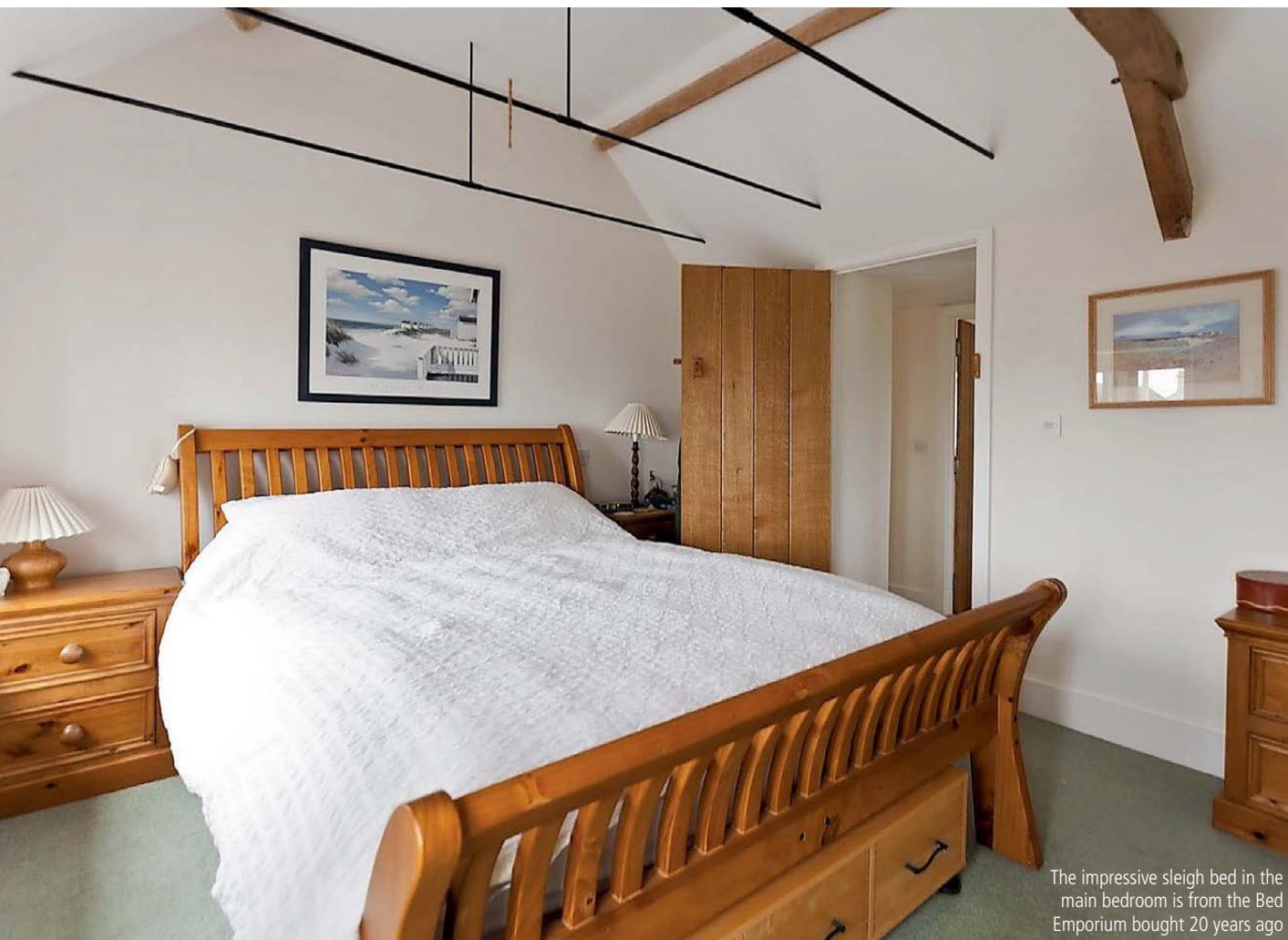
started off thinking how exciting it was all going to be and were extremely stressed by the end of it."

Apparently "everything that could go wrong, did go wrong." Such as the week that the couple was expecting their paid-for window frames to arrive was the week they learned the makers hadn't even begun them. "So we switched to Corineum Windows who did a wonderful job."

As for the worst moment it was when

the first lot of underfloor heating engineers turned up – "and clearly didn't have a clue; they had to come back three or four times."

Now the original owners would never recognise the place as various walls have been moved to create bigger rooms and they have extended into the new gable roof to add a fourth bedroom and en suite shower room. The roof itself was taken off, insulated, rotten timbers replaced and then as many as possible of the old stone ▶



The impressive sleigh bed in the main bedroom is from the Bed Emporium bought 20 years ago

“We find having underfloor heating throughout costs relatively little when coupled with solar panels on the roof and proper insulation in the walls and roof

The iron bedstead in the guest bedroom was found on the internet years ago



tiles salvaged with replacement ones added.

They also removed the old staircase and put a new one of oak into a different position and various windows or glass doors have been created or made larger to allow in as much light as possible. It meant RSJs were needed here and there.

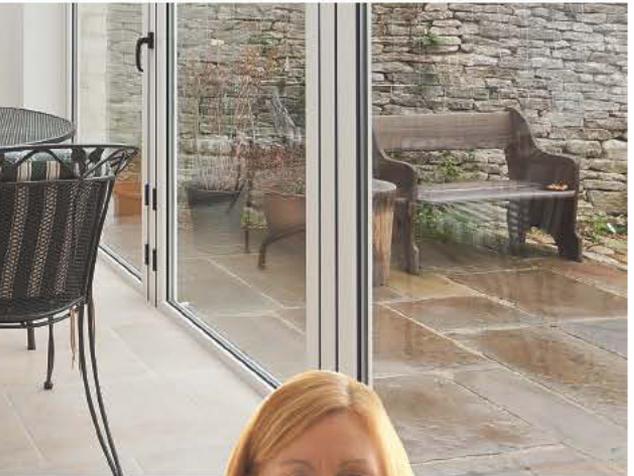
At the rear of the house an unwanted garage was demolished and the space and a yard were used to create a new sunroom, utility area and cloakroom.

New flooring of engineered oak was laid with a wet system of underfloor heating on both floors and the whole house was rewired, replastered and replumbed.

“It’s not economic to have both underfloor heating and radiators,” says Veronica. “We find having underfloor heating throughout costs relatively little when coupled with solar panels on the roof and proper insulation in the walls and roof.”

All the exposed joinery is of handmade oak including the doors and then the couple painted it throughout in Almond White by Dulux.

The room with the biggest makeover is ▶



The garden room is the Prides's favourite room from March through to October where they can enjoy the garden. It was built on the site of a garage. The furniture is from Kettler

the kitchen which is now twice its original size.

"Before it was rather a small room with post-war metal cabinets, vinyl floor tiles, an old gas stove and a larder with old-fashioned mesh grating to let in fresh air," she says.

"So we took out a half wall to incorporate the breakfast room and blocked up a door that led to an ugly back porch. We removed the back porch too and put in a big glass window facing south and replaced an east facing window with double glass doors leading to our new rooms at the back."

Veronica then asked Woodchester Cabinet Makers to design and make her new kitchen and now she has hand built Shaker-style units, hand painted in Reseda by Paint Library with white ceramic Hafele handles.

The worktops are antiqued granite and the floor is of French Reims limestone tiles from Beswick Stone as limestone absorbs heat well and therefore improves the effectiveness of the underfloor heating. WCM also supplied all the Neff appliances.

Veronica is a garden designer and so obviously their garden was of supreme importance. The level had to be lowered as it was above the floor level of the cottage, so making the building damp, but then the whole garden was completely re-



Veronica Pride

designed and built by her company Landart Gardens, which she runs with her colleague Hugo Burton. It comprises three distinct areas and one is the sunny courtyard beyond the sun room with a water feature created from an ancient stone trough which came with the cottage.

There is also a cottage garden area which has a feature Cotswold stone wall to set off the array of colourful plants with a seating area to catch the last of the evening sun. The third is the 'Artisan's Yard', providing two beautiful workshops, a sunken rainwater storage tank covered by an unusual tiring plate and a glass covered outside multi-purpose area.

The couple moved into their transformed new home in November 2009. So what are the best moments?

"Sitting in the sun room when it's chilly or the courtyard beyond when it's warm with a glass of wine enjoying the flowers, and the garden," says Veronica.

"We love living in the comfort and warmth provided by modern fixtures and heating while still having the character of the original Cotswold cottage. But we would never do it again!" ■

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