

29 WEST STREET

TAVISTOCK, PL19 8JY

SIMON EARLAND



ONGOING RENOVATION, CELLAR TANKING, UNDERFLOOR HEATING,
INSULATION, WOOD SASH DOUBLE GLAZING, DRAUGHTPROOFING

Background:

Simon is a mechanical engineer and a keen DIY enthusiast.

“When I bought the house it was rather run down and in need of TLC. I did not intend it to be a major project, but when I started working on the house it became apparent that many problems had been covered up in the past. I decided that I wanted to fix the problems and make the house as sound as possible as I renovate it.”

The 1830's terraced property has five floors plus an attic. It is built on a very steeply sloping site – the entrance from the street is two floors above the back garden. The walls are constructed from granite, slate and Hurdwick stone and the roof is synthetic slate. The front wall is rendered and the rear is slate hung.

The house is on mains electricity, gas, water and sewerage.

The property is in a conservation area but is not listed.

Renovation to mid-2014:

Installation of double glazed hardwood sash windows.

Installation of damp proof membranes and insulation to ground floor and cellar wall.

Installation of water underfloor heating in entrance hall, kitchen, shower room and utility room.

Replacement of oak lintels and suspended timber floors.

Replacement of old wiring and plumbing.

Conversion of a damp cellar into a “country kitchen”.

Timescale:

Windows – July 2004

Underfloor heating – June 2010

Kitchen – August 2011

Roof, insulation, heating system, wiring ongoing

Advice sought from:

West Devon Building Control

Many hours of research on the internet

Various building exhibitions, such as Ecobuild

Old House Eco Course

Windows – Harvey Benfield of Launceston, argon filled double glazed hardwood sash



Street elevation



Rear elevation - before and after

Damp Cellar to Dry and Warm Country Kitchen



The retaining wall in the kitchen was fitted with Newton 508 cavity drain membrane with a gully drain cut into the floor (slate bedrock). The floor insulation is a combination of Celotex insulation board and Actis Triso-Sols multifoil insulation. The retaining wall insulation is Actis Triso-Sols.



Underfloor heating system: Wavin (supply only) total 2.2 kW using 16mm polybutylene pipes clipped to the insulation board



45 mm thick Isocrete self-levelling screed (installed by J H Lidstone Ltd of Plymouth) covers the pipes and spreads heat in the floor plate



Lessons learnt

Old houses are full of surprises. When you start on what appears to be a fairly simple task there is a good chance you will discover a problem that needs to be fixed.

Beware of hardboard – it has probably been used to cover up something nasty.

Problems and solutions

Don't start too many things at the same time.

Plan things carefully to avoid having to modify things that you have already completed.

Buy the best tools you can afford – cheap tools are a false economy.

Impacts:

Progressive upgrading of comfort level. The damp-proofing made spaces habitable, underfloor heating is efficient, insulation, double glazing and draught-proofing reduces heat losses. Ongoing work will address further energy efficiencies.

Plans for the Future:

Simon will; Re-slate the roof and fit new roof insulation. Fit solar PV panels. Install mains pressure hot water cylinder and new condensing gas boiler. Complete the shower room, utility room and dining room. Lay oak floors in dining room and living room. Complete the re-wiring and re-plumbing.

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