

# Country House Renovation

Words by Julie Keary  
Photography by Alan Smyth

Interior Architect, Gráinne O'Neill of *Architectural Spaces* was thrilled when the owners of this wonderful home approached her with their charming fifty year old house which needed a new lease of life. The brief was to remodel the existing floor space to suit their needs as a family. It was very important for the owners to maintain the character of the dwelling but also introduce a mix of classic and contemporary touches which reflected their own personality. High on their wish list was to allow in as much light as possible and to create a classic contemporary home.



Gráinne saw great potential in this home and could visualise bringing the house up to date, giving it character, luxury, comfort and style with modern touches, while retaining the classic essence of the home.





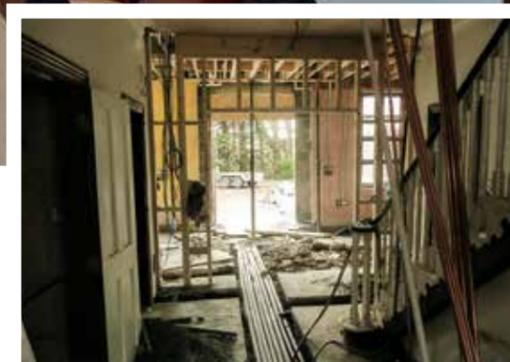
kitchen before





Gráinne set to work redesigning the internal floor plans and giving much thought to the design and the layout. Tailoring it to the family's day to day life, no area was wasted and every room was practical and functional. On the ground floor she removed the wall from the old dining room and kitchen and thus created a light filled kitchen/dining and living room that extends across the rear of the house, giving a most impressive spacious area. In the plan she positioned external French doors in the centre of the kitchen, lining them up with the new concealed sliding doors to the entrance hall — this would allow light to flow effortlessly through the house. On the first floor she created a large master bedroom by knocking two smaller rooms into one. It was extremely important for this designer to create that flow and continuity throughout the whole house.

Once the spatial plan was finalised she began work on the electrical, lighting and joinery design. The joinery design, including feature units, window surrounds and shutters were as important as the design of the spatial plan. Her attention to detail was meticulous and as much thought went into the design of the kitchen, bespoke storage in open plan living area, master vanity unit, walk through wardrobe, radiator covers as any other part of the house. The kitchen is ergonomically designed around the cream *aga* which is surrounded by loose cupboards and Gráinne decided to go with vibrant green tiles as a splash back to contrast the cream kitchen. Exquisite roman blinds add to the soft colouring of the kitchen units. She added a new contemporary gas fire to the living room area at the end of the kitchen and all the fabrics are modern in colour with rich designs in reds, pinks and greens.



hall before

The attention to detail is obvious with the feature window surround complemented by the custom made blinds. As well as the spatial plan, also very important for Gráinne was the attention to subtle and secret lighting details which can be seen in a number of rooms. The joinery details can also be seen everywhere in this house and together with her use of fabrics and textures, the whole scheme comes together. The 'easy-on-the-eye' yet stylish scheme has muted and chalky tones for the walls while the colour is added via the accessories. Neutral walls and floors are given a splash of colour in the form of soft furnishings. The introduction of simple traditional coving detail is very much in keeping with the character of the house. Wide plank smoked oak flooring and warm tones of taupe and cream were chosen for a cosy, casual scheme in the tv room.

In the master ensuite the specification of sanitary ware was classic and sympathetic to the style of the house. One of Grainne's signature features are the plantation shutters with which she achieves that wonderful New England theme in the main bathroom with a contemporary colour scheme and marble floor tiles. Tailor made storage as well as beautiful joinery details add character and elegance to the space.

**The airy, spacious bedrooms get an injection of colour from the carefully selected colours and fabrics of the window treatments and headboards. Colour schemes for each room vary with contrasting stronger shades for the children's rooms, but for the master bedroom Gráinne went with a softer and calmer colour scheme.**





Gráinne believes that interior spaces should flow effortlessly with no dead ends. Blocked space creates blocked energy so it's important to open up areas to encourage air to circulate, which in turn achieves a welcoming and airy home. The entire ground floor and first floor opens on to the entrance hall and original stairs, allowing each room to flow effortlessly into one another. The stairs is finished off with the personal touch of a photography wall linking the two floors.

The exterior of the home is transformed with a classic paint colour and the designer went with new timber double glazed sash windows in a cream to complement the muted shade on the exterior walls .

Character, luxury and comfort are indeed words that spring to mind while walking through this house. While it has many contemporary touches, it also seems to have a sense of its own history. The original fires, owner's antiques and paintings sit wonderfully in their new environment. The sympathetically renovated areas blend seamlessly with the original home. The interior finish mixes original features with new classic style furnishings to create a look which is truly timeless. A true labour of love for Gráinne O'Neill of *Architectural Spaces*.

**Get The Look**

Interior and Spatial Design Consultant:  
*Architectural Spaces*

Curtains fabrics, Headboards, Shutters  
and various accessories: *Architectural Spaces*

Timber floors: *Woodplus*

Carpets: *Carpet and Rug Centre*

Pendant Lights and Wall Lights:  
*Peter Murphy Electrical*

Sanitary ware: *Bathroom World*

Tiles: *Rocca Tiles*



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