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OPEN 7 DAYS A WEEK

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Retreat Home

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welcome

SUMMER 2016

It looks like summer is finally here! We hope you are out enjoying our great Kent beaches and beautiful Kent countryside. The guys at the Bumblebee Conservation Trust, tell us all about the plight of the bumblebee, their diminishing numbers, and how we all can help.

On the hunt for treasure this summer? We talk to the treasure hunter himself, the iconic Pasco of Wareham's in Whitstable. Antiques and Salvage fairs are held throughout the country and make a great family day out.

The team at Georgian Brickwork show us how they sympathetically restore the external brickwork to a 17th century cottage in Deal.

We have selected some great Garden Hideout ideas to inspire you and Jacksons Fencing reveal two new ranges of fence panels.

The Sheldon Spa competition was won by Kirsty Chapman from Faversham.

Have a great summer!

Dawn





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Drive up your kerb appeal

Kerb appeal is key, should you ever want to sell your house. Let's face it, prospective purchasers won't even get out of the car when they see rotten fencing, a potholed drive and a broken front path.

It must be depressing for the house owners, too. How much pleasanter it is to come home to a well-presented and cared-for property. Whether you're staying put or selling up, it's well worth investing in the outside as well as the inside of your home but, while you may enjoy choosing plants and garden ornaments for the finishing touches, you need an expert when it comes to the hard landscaping.

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New to the range...

Louise Tomlin introduces two stunning new additions to the Jackson's Fencing range of fence panels.

It's quite hard to come up with new ideas for fencing. Panels do tend to fit into a fairly predictable format of a certain width, normally 1.8m wide with varying heights, and of course, if they are timber, which is more often than not the case, they are woody in appearance - we like wood, so that's just fine. Our challenge is to come up with fresh ideas that will inspire our customers, giving them some new choices for their garden and other outdoor areas.

Hooray for some new additions to the already abundant and attractive range of fencing that we offer. And even if I say it myself, I think they are some winners in this new crop!

We've noticed that even though a lot of our customers prefer to stick with traditional types of fencing, like featherboard (AKA closeboard), there has been a sizeable swing towards the more modern and clean lined panels like our Venetian. In fact, this style has become so popular that we've found it has been imitated, I'd say in most cases rather poorly!

The first new panel to introduce

you to is a variation on the Venetian theme; I just mentioned how popular they are, but I'd say the one draw back is its see-throughness. It looks contemporary and sleek, complimenting the chic suburban garden beautifully. But when it comes to the balancing act of light versus privacy, the scales come down heavily in favour of light, and privacy is sacrificed!

So how do you get the stylish look of horizontal slats that still allows some air and light through, but doesn't allow the neighbours a view of you baring your body to catch some rays? Answer: new Venetian Hit and Miss panels (shown to the right). They look as stylish as standard Venetian, but have another set of horizontal slats on the other side. These are fixed to cover the space between the slats on the first side. The slats alternate, in much the same way as hit and miss panels are made. Which means some air and light can still pass through, but the view through is obscured. Another big benefit is they are what we refer to as 'good both sides' so you and





New Tartan panels looking pretty with summer planting

your neighbours don't have a view of rails, which can be a bone of contention.

I'm aware I'm only going to have enough space to tell you about two of our lovely 'newbies' here, so will save the other additions for another time, and tell you about my personal favourite; Tartan trellis, there it is at the top of the page, how pretty is that? I think it fits into the 'less is more' school of design - by not putting a baton at every third spacing, we've created a pattern that looks really great. I'm amazed at how effective it looks.

Enough said, I hope I've whetted your appetite, if you'd like to know more about these or our other new products, go to your dedicated web page www.jacksons-fencing.co.uk/ashfordlocal.

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Bee POSITIVE



It's time we all did our bit to help threatened insect pollinators.



Farmers and gardeners have always known how important pollinating insects are. Bees, beetles, butterflies and moths do a vital job of fertilising flowers, and without them we would have far fewer food crops and very few fruits and berries in our gardens.

To bring the buzz back to your garden and enjoy the brilliance of returning butterflies there are a few simple steps to take. Firstly learn to live without insecticides and to tolerate a few more weedy corners in the garden. Secondly, provide good shelter through the winter months. Leaves piled along the back of borders, evergreens trained over fences and walls, and maybe a patch of long grass at the far end of the lawn will ensure

that nesting bees and hoverflies, moth chrysalises and hibernating butterflies have somewhere safe to shelter. Thirdly you can make an enormous difference by growing pollinator-friendly flowers. Choose simple, single flowers instead of complicated double cultivars.

Various national surveys are showing just how important gardens can be for nature conservation. For some species of bees, butterflies and other pollinators the nation's gardeners are becoming a critical factor for survival and it's really no hardship to grow more colourful flowers. The resulting buzz of life will give you a double satisfaction - this is one way in which each of us can really make a difference.



Plant selector

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT

Caryopteris x clandonensis
(caryopteris)

Hesperis matronalis
(dame's violet)

Hyssopus officinalis (hyssop)
Lavandula angustifolia
(English lavender)

Lychnis coronaria (rose campion)

Weigela florida (weigelia)

Monarda didyma
(bergamot or bee balm)

Jasminum officinale
(common jasmine)



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Beauty and the Bees!

The Bumblebee Conservation Trust reveal the plight of the bumblebee and what we can do to help support their work.

Bumblebees are familiar and much loved insects. Many of us associate seeing their bumbling flight and hearing their audible buzz with a typical British summer's day. While we enjoy the warmth of the sun day they are busy at work, moving from flower to flower, collecting pollen and nectar to sustain their colonies, pollinating our garden flowers, wild flowers and crops as they go. They are truly industrious insects, and a great many organisms benefit from that industry - not least ourselves. Some studies have estimated that insect-pollinated crops account for one third of every mouthful we eat and that bumblebees pollinate up to 80% of those crops in the

northern hemisphere.

There are a total of 25 different bumblebee species in the UK. Sadly several of these have experienced serious declines in recent times and two are now nationally extinct. One species, the Short-haired bumblebee is only present as a result of efforts to reintroduce it. The last of native Short-haired bumblebee was found in Dungeness, Kent, in 1988 and they were officially declared extinct in the UK in 2000. Since then the Short-haired bumblebee reintroduction project has undertaken annual efforts to reintroduce this species; bringing in queens from a stable population in Sweden, releasing them in spring to start their colonies and hopefully re-establish a UK population. This work has included lots of habitat improvement in and around the Dungeness area to tackle the driving force behind their decline - habitat loss. Staggeringly, the UK has lost over a 97% of its wildflower meadows since the 1930s, leaving bumblebees and other pollinators with

"Some studies have estimated that insect-pollinated crops account for one third of every mouthful we eat and that bumblebees pollinate up to 80% of those crops in the northern hemisphere."





Above: A Buff-tail bumblebee queen collecting pollen from a Crocus in spring.



Left: A Common carder bumblebee about to feed on a lavender plant.

Bottom left: The Great yellow bumblebee was once found all over the UK, but is now restricted to the very north and west of Scotland.



very little to feed on. This combined with new pressures like pesticide exposure and the threat of parasites and diseases is putting our precious pollinators at risk.

However, all is not lost. There is much we can all do to support bumblebees and other pollinators in our gardens, which are fast becoming one of the last safe havens for our bumbling buddies. If we can all work to try and have at least some bee-friendly plants in flower between the months of March and October we can help sustain bumblebees throughout their full annual life-cycle. Even those who are limited on space can help by planting in a window box or container.

Tips for the garden



CONTAINERS

Containers on patios, window boxes and hanging baskets are just as good for bees as lush borders. Fill them with herbs like thyme, chives, rosemary and marjoram (useful in the kitchen too), strawberries, nasturtiums and trailing varieties of catmints and fuchsias. It's best to avoid plants like petunias, busy Lizzies, begonia and pelargonium (sometimes known as annual geranium), as they produce little or no food for bees, despite their showy blooms. Patio roses are also nice, but make sure to get a variety with an 'open' flower that the bees can reach inside to get the pollen and nectar from rather than the typical showy romantic rose. Other herbaceous perennials for containers include astilbe, with their clouds of pink flowers, and heuchera, which comes in dozens of varieties with dark leaves and delicate pink-white flowers on tall stalks.



Top tip

Remember to keep container plants well-watered though as they can be more prone to drying out than those planted directly into the ground.



HEDGING

If you're considering a barrier or screen in the garden, why not consider some bee-friendly hedging plants? Natives such as hawthorn and blackthorn are most useful, and you can weave climbing plants such as roses and honeysuckle through them. For an evergreen option, privet is useful if the flowers are left and the hedge isn't cut too often.

Top tip

Consider having some native hedgerow plants along the base, as they will be right at home under a hedge. Plants like foxglove, bluebell and primrose are hardy and look after themselves, and bring more interest to what can sometimes be a monotonous feature.



BORDERS

There's an almost endless number of bee-friendly plants that are suitable for borders. Many of these are herbaceous perennials like hardy geraniums, sage, catmints, cone flowers, lavenders and hellebores. These can be easily planted with bulbs like alliums, crocus, tulip and hyacinth, which will provide low-maintenance interest throughout the year.

Top tip

The backs of borders are also good nesting spots for bumblebees, and you can help them set up home by leaving piles of twigs, grass cuttings or broken crockery at the back of the border.

ANNUALS

Many annuals are easy to grow from seed, highly recommended plants to have a go at growing yourself include borage, cornflower, annual cone flowers, cosmos and sunflowers. You can also buy 'wildflower mixes' containing most of these plants, along with things like poppies, nigellas and musk mallows. These can usually be sown directly into prepared soil.

Top tip

Create a mini-meadow by removing grass and sowing bee-friendly annuals in spring.



TREES AND SHRUBS

Most fruit trees require bee pollinators, so having apples, pears, plums and cherries will also feed the bees in your garden. Smaller fruiting shrubs like blackcurrant, gooseberry, raspberry and blackberry are much-loved by bees, despite their inconspicuous flowers. Ornamental shrubs can also be useful, and buddleias, red claws, flowering currants, pussy willows and weigelas are all bee favourites.

Top tip

If you've only got room for containers, shrubs like pieris and azaleas are visually stunning, and will be totally buzzing with bees when in flower.



**Bumblebee
Conservation
Trust**

Beyond the garden

One of the simplest and easiest ways to help bumblebees is to support the work of the *Bumblebee Conservation Trust* - an organisation dedicated to raising awareness about and protecting UK bumblebees. The work that is being done is helping to monitor and protect our rarest species, from the endangered Great Yellow bumblebee restricted to the very North of the UK, to the scarce Shrill-carder bumblebee on the Pembrokeshire coast in Wales, and also the Bilberry bumblebee in the Peak District, to the rare bumblebees of Kent, which include the Short-haired bumblebee, the Moss carder bumblebee and the Ruderal bumblebee.

The Bumblebee Conservation Trust is currently preparing to launch a new project in Kent, named 'Making a Buzz for the Coast', with the aim of enhancing the coastal habitats in Kent for the benefit of bees and other wildlife. This area contains a great diversity of beneficial wildflowers with the potential to support a great diversity of bee species, not just bumblebees but also many solitary bee species too. The

plan is to re-connect these habitats, which encompass a 300 mile stretch from Dartford to Rye, and enhance them in order to increase the suitable foraging areas for bees, increasing their populations as a result. This will involve working with land owners, local groups and communities to help them play a vital role in protecting the bees in this area for generations to come.

The hugely important work that the Bumblebee Conservation Trust is carrying out to protect bumblebees across the UK would not be possible without the crucial backing of the Bumblebee Conservation Trust's supporters. This year, the Bumblebee Conservation Trust is celebrating its 10th year anniversary and is hoping to grow its membership base of like-minded people, with a genuine concern for the future of these charismatic insects to 10,000 members.

To find out more about the Bumblebee Conservation Trust and how you can support this vital work, please visit www.bumblebeeconservation.org.



lifestyle

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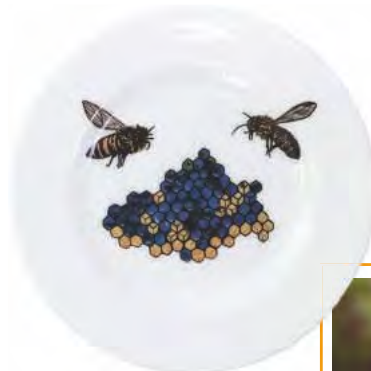
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Gail Ryder Richardson, from Georgian Brickwork, explains the importance of quality workmanship and the use of traditional materials and methods.

TRADITIONAL CONSERVATION

The Georgian Brickwork team are renowned across Kent for their craftsmanship and attention to detail. They take the time to discuss their clients' requirements and they carry out careful research on the original materials prior to attempting any repairs. Their aim is to respect the heritage of the building and, using traditional methods and materials, to carry out sensitive and sympathetic repairs that blend seamlessly with the original brickwork.

The team work on Georgian, Victorian and Edwardian properties and are highly skilled in all aspects of heritage brickwork, including the use of lime mortar, lime pointing and re-pointing, tuck pointing, gauged arches and carved brickwork.

A recent restoration project to a tiny cottage in Deal is a great example of how the Georgian Brickwork team transform a heritage property.

Pinkers is situated in the heart of the Conservation Area in Deal. Dating from the early 17th century and said to be the oldest cottage in Middle Street, it was in need of sympathetic repairs to restore the external brickwork. The current owner was aware that his previous attempt at appointing a contractor to re-point the brickwork had not been entirely successful and he therefore contacted Dr Gerard Lynch, an internationally respected academic on historical brickwork, to ask for his recommendation regarding a Kent-based



specialist bricklayer. Dr Lynch put the owner in touch with Georgian Brickwork, and the restoration of the front façade of Pinkers began.

The front elevation was surveyed and a number of defective bricks were identified. Replacement bricks were sourced and once in place these bricks were tinted as necessary to ensure an even finish and good match to the original bricks. The existing pointing was removed across the whole front of the cottage, and the mortar joints were raked out to a depth of 25mm, to ensure strength and good adhesion. A sample of the original mortar was analysed to aid identification of appropriate sand for the NHL 3.5 mortar mix. A brushed joint was used for the re-pointing and, at the completion of the work, parts of the front elevation were soot-washed to give an aged appearance and blend it in with the surrounding cottages.

TRADITIONAL CONSERVATION



What did the owner think of their work?

“Charles & Tim have done a fantastic job on my little cottage. It has been transformed. Not only have they done a great job but it was just great to have them around and I learnt so much as they generously shared their extensive knowledge with me and carefully guided me through the process.” Based in Ramsgate in East Kent, Georgian Brickwork provides a specialist brickwork service for clients across Kent and London. Whether your period property is large or small they can help you repair and restore the brickwork to its former glory. Why not get in touch and tell Georgian Brickwork about your project?

For more information contact:

Charles Reilly & Tim Germaney

Tel: 07732 975 349

Email: info@georgianbrickwork.co.uk

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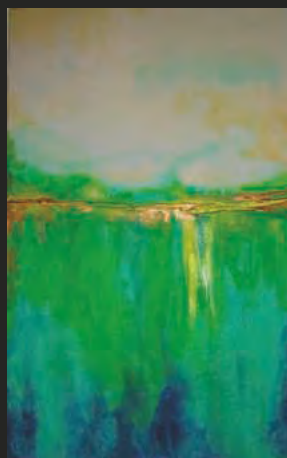
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IN WITH THE OLD

Reclaimed, original,
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Conservation News meets a purveyor of reclaimed 'treasures' as characterful as his goods, and looks at the growing trend for something old rather than something new.

WORDS: SUSAN HUBBARD

It's hard not to notice Wareham's when you drive in to Whitstable. The forecourt may display a pile of old wooden apple boxes, a couple of original Kent cherry-picking ladders, or an impressive pair of reclaimed church doors leant up against the wall alongside antique stone statues and ornate benches, providing a welcome distraction for passing motorists caught in a weekend traffic jam.

Among the artefacts may be seated Pasco, the master of the emporium which bears his unusual first name, a mug of coffee or glass of red wine close at hand on one of his beautiful salvaged tables, enjoying the sunshine and passing the time of day with customers, friends and his dog Layla.



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After 14 years on the prominent corner site, Pasco has become almost as much of a local institution as his antique furniture and garden ornament business. His connections in film and television make for some interesting tales to share on the forecourt. A huge old stone boar which greeted passers-by for about three years - and had more than 200 Facebook friends - came from a Harry Potter film set where Pasco was supplying props. Its eventual sale to a French chateau was seen as important enough to be reported in a local newspaper.

Pasco enjoys his role as a 'character' who loves the locality and its people, but he has also rubbed shoulders with the rich and famous through his work.

"I was the chauffeur in Absolutely Fabulous, though you never saw me! That came about after I supplied them with a car," he says, and he talks of invitations by wealthy customers to jaw-droppingly glamorous events - "I had to borrow a decent vehicle from my son to go to one, then found everyone else arrived by helicopter!"

Recently, he's helped out with props for the BBC series *Taboo*, starring Tom Hardy, while Kent celebrities Bob Geldof, Harry Hill and Fay Ripley are among the buyers of his decorative furniture



and antique garden ornament (“not ornaments - I learnt that from Sotheby’s”, he says). Other customers are based in London and as far as the USA, with deals being struck over the internet.

Pasco’s current favourite items are a pair of stone cherubs reclining in the shop window, and he gives the impression that he will part with them only reluctantly. Garden antiques are “my passion”, he says, and if he really loves something he will buy it from the heart. But he has a good eye too: who would have guessed that a large consignment of apple boxes would be bought by the Cath Kidston company for ‘dressing’ their stores?

Much of the stock comes from France and Belgium. Every so often, Pasco and a mate will set off in his van “looking for treasure”. France is especially good for large mirrors, he says, and Hungary is a fruitful source of painted furniture

Pasco also visits antique fairs in the UK. Among the jewellery and knick-knacks, many of these events offer reclaimed architectural items which can help restore homes to their original style. There is a growing market for these, because no longer are we ripping out old fireplaces and pulling off picture rails - we’re



“Kent celebrities Bob Geldof, Harry Hill and Fay Ripley are among the buyers of his decorative furniture and antique garden ornament.”

hunting them down and putting them back in.

In the 21st century, the recycling conscience has literally hit home, and we have a desire for buying salvaged and reclaimed furnishings and furniture which fit in with the original style and period of an old house.

This wind of change blew in when an Act of Parliament in 1990 introduced conservation areas, defined as being where “the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance”.



Of course, this legislation is mainly concerned with the external appearance of a building, but we've gradually adopted the spirit of the law inside our homes and gardens too, even inspiring 'heritage' ranges of paint in

colours chosen to reflect the age of the property and which are now on sale in every DIY shop, not just at specialists.

We're all switched on to thinking about recycling and sustainability every time we throw away a can or bottle, and the same thought process can be applied to the home, so that second-hand is now both chic and responsible.

David Boulting, deputy editor of The Building Conservation Directory, has written that in the case of timber, "older material is often of superior quality". He goes on to say that modern hardwoods are expensive, and sometimes linked to unsustainable and/or illegal forestry practices. "Common sense dictates that such material should be re-used where possible," he says.

Sourcing older artefacts has never been easier. SalvoWEB is an online directory of dealers and offers information about the trade. It is particularly good in helping to honour the Salvo code, which seeks to ensure that items have not been removed from protected historic buildings without permission. There is an explanation of this and also a list of recent 'theft alerts' on the website.

Many people buy and sell over the internet, but it's often more fun (and educational) if you can afford the time to spend a day at a fair. These are held all over the country - we list some of the summer ones - and it may be well worth making a special trip if you have a project under way, or calling in if you are on holiday in the area.

Before you go, you're advised to think

carefully about what you want to buy and how much to spend. Bring cash, as not all events have cash machines and not all traders can take cards. This is also a good way of limiting spending, as once your cash is gone, it's gone! And don't be shy of haggling, especially if you buy more than one item from a dealer. It's the expected thing.

Think about your transport - will you need a roof-rack? Take some blankets to protect and cover your purchases. Tape measure, notebook, pen and camera are also useful. If it's an outdoor event, check the forecast and be prepared for scorching sun or heavy rain.

Don't worry if you go home empty-handed or nearly so. You'll be better informed next time after a few hours of browsing, and above all, you'll have had a great day out!



"Don't be shy of haggling, especially if you buy more than one item from a dealer. It's the expected thing."

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Summer fairs 2016

A handy round-up of the major antiques, vintage and salvage fairs taking place around the country this summer.



**FRIDAY 1ST - SUNDAY 3RD JULY &
FRIDAY 16TH - SUNDAY 18 SEPTEMBER**

Antiques, Vintage and Collectors Fair,
Royal Bath and West Showground,
Shepton Mallet, Somerset, BA4 6QN
www.iacf.co.uk Tel: 01636 702326.



**TUESDAY 19TH & WEDNESDAY
20TH JULY, TUESDAY 6TH &
WEDNESDAY 7TH SEPTEMBER**

International Antiques and Collectors Fair,
South of England Showground, Ardingly, near
Haywards Heath, West Sussex
www.iacf.co.uk, RH17 6TL Tel: 01636 702326.



**MONDAYS 11TH JULY,
8TH AUGUST & 12TH SEPTEMBER**

Antiques and collectors market,
Sandown Park Racecourse, Esher,
Surrey, KT10 9AJ
www.iacf.co.uk Tel: 01636 702326.



**TUESDAYS 12TH & 26TH JULY,
9TH & 30TH AUGUST**

Sunbury Antiques Market,
Kempton Park Racecourse,
Sunbury-on-Thames, TW16 5AQ
www.sunburyantiques.com
Tel: 01932 230946.

SATURDAY 16TH JULY

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Regency Unitarian Church, New Road,
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www.upcycledhour.co.uk



SATURDAY 16 & SUNDAY 17TH JULY

Decorative Home and Salvage Show, Loseley Park, Guildford, Surrey, GU3 1HS
www.asfairs.com Tel: 01298 27493.



FRIDAY 29TH & SATURDAY 30TH JULY

Antiques and Collectors Fair,
 Newbury Showground, Priors Court Road,
 Hermitage, Newbury, Berkshire, RG18 9QZ
www.iacf.co.uk Tel: 01636 702326.



FRIDAY 29TH & SATURDAY 30TH JULY

Antiques and Collectors Fair,
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SATURDAY 6TH & SUNDAY 7TH AUGUST

Decorative Home and Salvage Show, Cheshire Showground, Knutsford, WA16 0JE
www.asfairs.com Tel: 01298 27493.



WEDNESDAYS 27TH JULY, 31ST AUGUST, 28TH SEPTEMBER

Windsor Brocante and Salvage Fairs, Royal Windsor Racecourse, SL4 5EZ,
www.bentleysfairs.co.uk Tel: 07828 772475.



MONDAY 15TH & TUESDAY 16TH AUGUST

Antiques and Home Show, Lincolnshire Showground, LN2 2NA
www.asfairs.com Tel: 01298 27493.



SATURDAY 27TH - MONDAY 29TH AUGUST

Decorative Fair, Beale Park, Lower Basildon,
Reading, RG8 9NW
www.bentleysfair.sco.uk Tel: 07828 772475.



THURSDAY 18TH & FRIDAY 19TH AUGUST

International Antiques and Collectors Fair,
Newark & Nottinghamshire Showground,
NG24 2NY www.acf.co.uk Tel: 01636 702326.



SUNDAY 4TH SEPTEMBER

Antiques and Collectors Fair,
Alexandra Palace, Alexandra Palace Way,
London, N22 7AY
www.iacf.co.uk Tel: 01636 702326.

SATURDAY 3RD - SUNDAY 4TH SEPTEMBER

Detling Antiques, Vintage & Collectors Fair,
The Kent County Showground, Detling, Nr
Maidstone, Kent ME14 3JF
www.b2bevents.info/detling



SATURDAY 10TH & SUNDAY 11TH SEPTEMBER

Decorative Home and Salvage Show,
Ripley Castle, Harrogate, HG3 3AY
www.asfairs.com Tel: 01298 27493.



MONDAY 26TH SEPTEMBER

Antiques and Collectors Fair, Drove Lane,
Newark, Nottinghamshire, NG24 2NY
(next to Newark Air Museum and the
Showground)
www.iacf.co.uk Tel: 01636 702326.

PLEASE NOTE

*Information on these pages is provided in good
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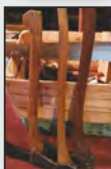
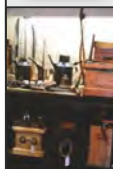
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Discover how you can use reclaimed and salvaged pieces in your period property.

Recent government figures show that around 45% of the UK's annual carbon emissions come from building and construction work. Added to that, only 1% of the country's building projects use reclaimed materials.

With figures like these it's crucial that we are more mindful of our environment when it comes to building or restoration projects. One way of doing this is to ensure that any repairs or replacements are in keeping with your period property, is to use reclaimed or salvaged materials. Reusing increases your green credentials and produces less of a carbon footprint than buying new.

The key to successful salvage shopping is to act on instinct, be positive and keep an open mind. If you like it - go for it. Having said that it's important to be prepared when hunting for salvage. Take a notepad so that you can jot down measurements, and contact details of any dealers whose stock you may be interested in.

Be aware that old furniture may need repairs or reupholstery and old lighting may need updating by an electrician, all of which will add to the total cost. It's also possible that you will

need to make alterations to some older pieces to adhere to modern standards and regulations.

Reclaimed timber can be used for a variety of tasks, including doors, flooring, mantles and furniture, and will add character and integrity to your property. Look for timber that is de-nailed, has had any split ends trimmed and isn't too damp or water damaged.

Cast-iron radiators are statement fixtures that can instantly return period details and style to your property and are increasingly being used in contemporary projects as stand-out pieces against minimal, understated fittings.

There is a wealth of wonderful original features and salvaged goods out there waiting to be used. Pay a visit to your local salvage yard before your next project to find everything from reclaimed bricks and tiles, to doors and fireplaces. Some items will be cleaned, refurbished and ready to install, whilst others will need a little TLC before you can bring them into your home.

Finally, don't let any preconceptions prevent you from making a purchase, you never know what you might find.

The power of BEETLE JUICE

Damage and restoration specialist, Richard Tozer
demystifies the art of french polishing.

My mobile phone broke the other day. I phoned my network supplier to arrange a replacement, and the sales rep asked me what phone I would like and “what I would be using it for”?

Now call me old-fashioned, to me a phone has always been for talking to people who are too far away to shout at. I guess I knew what she meant, but it isn't that long ago that her question really would have been ridiculous.

It reminded me that I am often asked by interested and inquisitive visitors to my restoration workshop what french polish is, and where it comes from. Foremost, I explain that french polish is a process, not a material. Then, I might add, it hasn't got anything to do with wax or come to that, anything to do with bees.

The real answer, particularly offered with playground humour, does sound rather ridiculous. I most generally reply that the material used to french polish is beetle 'poo'... this isn't strictly true, although it does come from an excretion of the lac beetle. It is 'lac' that is the product (lac forming the words shellac and lacquer) which is secreted by the beetle, and then dissolved in alcohol. This forms a

runny liquid with the viscosity of thin oil and when applied gives the surface a pleasant sheen.

I think this is one of those marvels of life that you start to think about with a little bewilderment.

How on earth did someone ever consider collecting this secreted beetle goo, mixing it with alcohol, and then rubbing it over their dining plank and milking stool to make it shiny? Maybe the clue is in the use of alcohol!

I learned to french polish in the spring of 1979, straight after leaving school. It satisfied every part of my creative being and my love of furniture and antiques. Frankly, I never looked back, and have continued to restore and polish for my whole working life ever since that first introduction.

Although nowadays my working hours are filled with phone calls from online sales representatives, discussing the merits of mobile phone technology (and the benefits of Siri or indeed the 'infinity mode' for when you launch your new appliance as far as the eye can see), I mostly look forward to my many restoration tasks, but it is french polishing that I still enjoy the best.



“French polish is a process, not a material. Then, I might add, it hasn’t got anything to do with wax or come to that, anything to do with bees.”





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Shepherd's huts were sheds on wheels that shepherds pulled out into the fields during lambing time. Today, you can pick up new or renovated huts and they make characterful outside rooms. This made to order hut costs around £31,000 and is insulated, wired and comes with kitchen and bathroom areas and fitted furniture.
roundhillsshepherdhuts.co.uk

Quirky GARDEN RETREATS

A few decades ago, the only structure in a British garden was the trusty old shed. Today, quirky and contemporary garden rooms are popping up in backyards across the land, acting as offices, hip hangouts and even guest accommodation.

An off-the-peg outdoor room is a standard option, but why not go for something really unique that will make a fun garden feature? In recent years there has been a real boom in unusual holiday lets, with rentable retreats that range from converted train carriages to state-of-the-art yurts.

Independent companies across the country are offering characterful structures in an array of shapes, sizes and styles, complete with lighting, insulation and heating, so they can be enjoyed whatever the weather. For lovers of all things retro, there is an abundance of replica antique structures such as gypsy caravans and shepherds' huts.

As far as planning permission goes, it really depends on the size and style of structure you go for. It's always best to check the facts with your local planning department before purchasing anything.



GOING TO THE CHAPEL

This ultra quirky design is inspired by the prefab iron structures that were once used as mission halls and chapels. The model shown uses corrugated tin and reclaimed materials; comes fully wired complete with salvaged windows, a porch, bell spire and oak detailing. From Lassco. For more information visit lassco.co.uk.

MODERN TWIST

Ultra sleek 'pods' bring contemporary chic and natural cedar charm to your garden. For the complete package, each pod inner is created by a specialist interior designer and comes ready fitted and furnished for all sorts of uses.

The 'Classic' is £18,950.

For more information visit gardenhideouts.co.uk.



LIVE THE HIGH LIFE!

This luxury treehouse by Blue Forest has a deck, fully wired interior complete with TV, zip-wire, rope bridge and a trampoline. As it can be built with supporting stilts it's not necessary to have a tree for support. Priced from around £72,000.

For more information visit blueforest.com.



ECO-FRIENDLY

This steel structure was once a commercial shipping container before being converted by Green Roof Shelters. It features a roof planted with wildflowers, and has attached nesting places to help encourage wildlife. Prices start at £38,220.

For more information visit greenroofshelters.co.uk.

GYPSY STYLE

With room for four to sleep this handmade bowtop caravan is the perfect garden guest accommodation. It features a seasoned pine frame, Indian organic cotton lining and a fully waterproofed and insulated outer covering. From £11,500. For more information visit gregsgypsybowtops.co.uk.



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This charming beach hut offers direct sea views, a smartly laid out interior comprising an open lounge/ kitchenette and mezzanine level. It also includes three canoes, tables, chairs and a BBQ.



CROMWELL ROAD,
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An individually built three bedroom detached family home in the heart of Whitstable and just a short walk to the harbour. The property is light and spacious with beautiful features such as oak wood panelling.



MACDONALD PARADE,
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Offered for sale with no onward chain this three bedroom detached bungalow with double garage and low maintenance garden is situated a short walk from a popular shop, doctors surgery and church.



MINNIS ROAD, BIRCHINGTON
CT7 9QB **£112,500**

This spacious split level one bedroom apartment is positioned just a short walk to the sea front at popular Minnis Bay with easy access to Birchington High Street and train station. The property is light and airy and ready to move into.



OLD BRIDGE ROAD,
WHITSTABLE CT5 1RB **£430,000**

Offered for sale with no onward chain this well proportioned 4/5 bedroom home is ideally positioned by Whitstable's mainline train station. It offers flexible accommodation and a beautiful landscaped garden with summer house.



PRIEST WALK, WHITSTABLE
CT5 2QN **£450,000**

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LIVERTON PLACE, Sandway

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Liverton Place records date back as far as 1720 having been a former coaching inn used as a stopover point for weary travellers to change horses.

The current vendors have owned the property some 30 years having originally purchased it as three cottages, they have spent great time and effort restoring the home to its former glory creating a characterful yet practical family residence.

The accommodation is arranged over four floors to include an entrance hall, two basements, drawing room, dining room with inglenook fire, study, snug, conservatory, kitchen/breakfast room, utility and downstairs





cloakroom. To the first floor, there is a master bedroom with en-suite bathroom, three further bedrooms and a main bathroom. Two staircases lead to the second floor in the roof offering two further double bedrooms.

Outside, the property is approached by a gated gravel driveway with off road parking for numerous vehicles. The secluded grounds are predominantly laid to lawn with a variety of mature shrubs, trees and borders.

The property is situated between the hamlets of Platts Heath and Grafty Green and is located 10.3 miles from the County town of Maidstone with its many shopping facilities and 12.3 miles from Ashford International railway station with fast connection to St Pancras in just 37 minutes.

Headcorn village is 4.7 miles away and benefits from a mainline station with

connections to Charing Cross and a variety of local shops. Lenham village is just 2.0 miles away with a Primary School, Secondary School, mainline station to Victoria and a variety of shops.

PROPERTY DETAILS

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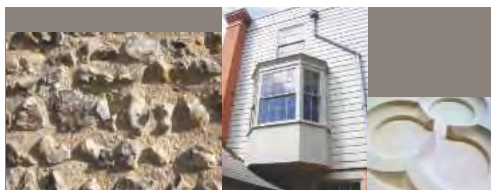
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