

Victorian home back to its former glory

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PROPERTY CORRESPONDENT

MOST people are cock-a-hoop if they buy an old place and all the hard work to bring it up to date has been done.

Jeremy Ward and his partner Alison Jeffers differ from the norm. After they moved into their four bedroom Victorian house in High Wycombe six-and-a-half years ago, they ripped out the modern improvements put in by the previous owners in the 1970s and reinstated features which were there when Nethercote was built in 1885.

Alison said: "It helps that Jeremy specialises in restoring period properties to former glory for a living. I don't have building skills. My special forte is shopping for curtains at John Lewis."

The Totteridge Lane house had more than usual appeal for them, not least because of the partially-converted brick and flint coach house in the grounds. The new owners successfully applied for planning permission to complete the transformation from stable block to one bedroom cottage and it now has separate title deeds.

The first job in the main house was to tackle one or two structural repairs, rewire and replace the central heating.

As part of the measures to reinstate the original character, they did away with the secondary double glazing and restored the original sash windows fitting new cords and weights.

They discovered the old quarry tiles beneath ceramic tiles in the kitchen and study and got rid of the ceramics. They unblocked the chimney in the drawing room and now have open fires with the style of fireplace that would have been there when the house was built.

They also tracked down a 1920s Aga and put it in the kitchen where the range would have been in the past but this time there's a Zanussi double oven and four ring gas hob for cooking.

They jettisoned a pair of aluminium patio doors and replaced them with the right doors for the period and did the same with the previous conservatory. The new garden room



Spacious: The garden room with its sofas and wide outlook

has the grace and style of a conservatory of the Palm Court era.

Three of the four bedrooms have fireplaces but the master bedroom has an ensuite shower room. Modern plumbing and central heating have their charms.

Nethercote now has three reception rooms not counting the garden room, four bedrooms and two bathrooms with a further living room, kitchen, bedroom and bathroom in the cottage.

However Jeremy and Alison have come across a thatched cottage which has seized their imagination so they're in a mood to move on. Consequently their Totteridge Lane property which has been their pride and joy for six years is up for sale through Aitchisons' Wycombe office. They're inviting offers around £700,000 for both properties or £550,000 for the main house and £150,000 for the converted coach house. The two can be sold separately or as a job lot.

Call the agents on 01494 450871

'My special forte is shopping for curtains at John Lewis'
Alison Jeffers



Tasteful: The drawing room