

Magnificent MEWS

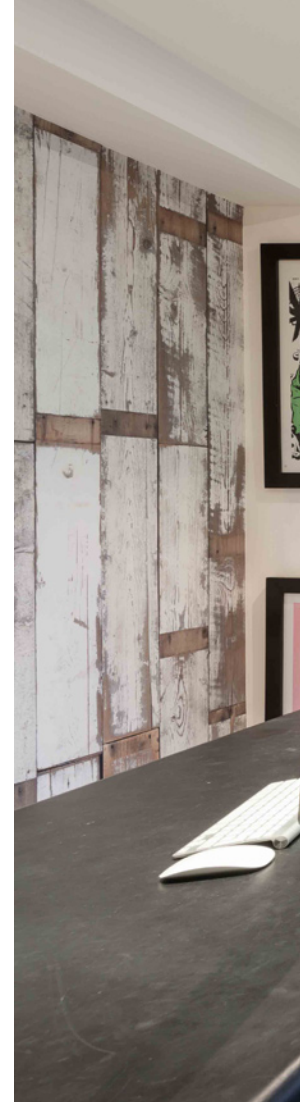
PICTURE: PHIL TAYLOR



DJ and TV presenter Reggie Yates has a surprising passion for property, and his latest project involved totally reinventing a London mews house.

STORY: **DEBBIE JEFFERY**

PICTURES: **THE MODERN HOUSE**



In the past Reggie Yates admits he's partied hard, but nowadays there's nothing he enjoys more than entertaining at home, watching football in his home cinema and playing board games around the kitchen table with his friends.

"I moved out of my parents' house when I was 18 because I was fortunate enough to have several ongoing contracts with the BBC, so I was able to get involved in property from that age," he says.

Reggie's career started when he was just eight years old and appeared in the comedy *Desmond's*. He later found fame for his work on Radio 1, presented *Top of the Pops* and recently fronted the first two series of the BBC's *The Voice*.

Over the past 12 years Reggie, now 30, has renovated various homes and traded up several times, with each property becoming more and more ambitious. Recently he purchased a home in Stoke Newington in Hackney before it became a trendy and desirable postcode, renovated that property and sold it on for a profit before taking on his latest project – which involved totally gutting and remodelling a 1980s mews house in London's Camden.

The house was originally designed by noted architects CZWG as part of a terrace of classically-inspired town houses in a cobbled private road, but when Reggie viewed the building in 2012 it had fallen into disrepair and was in desperate need of a makeover.

"When I first saw the house it was a bit of a mess to be honest, but it had such great potential and looked like it could be a really interesting property," he says. "I'm a real sucker for interiors magazines and subscribe to a whole series of them, so I've got hundreds and hundreds of magazines that I used for inspiration, but I needed someone to help me organise my thoughts into a practical design."





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Pictures: The exterior of the 1980s-built mews house remains unchanged, and matches its neighbours in the terrace. The former garage has been converted into a cinema room.



Above: The simple open-plan kitchen incorporates masses of sleek built-in storage contrasting with open shelving and a rustic cabinet.

Fortunately one of Reggie's closest friends owns property renovation company Churchill Restoration, and was able to recommend architect Tony Michael who he had worked with in the past.

"I wanted to have some fun and really go to town on the refurb," recalls Reggie, who lived in a rented house during the seven-month project. "I didn't have time to go out and find all the separate contractors, but Churchill Restoration is essentially a one-stop shop and worked alongside the architect. Having a talented team to execute my ideas was really exciting, and they came up with plenty of their own suggestions too."

Structurally the house was in good repair, but internally it is now unrecognisable. The floorplan has been completely redesigned: walls were removed, the garage was converted into a luxurious home cinema and the wasted loft space is now a stunning mezzanine level occupied by the principal bedroom.

"I walked around the property with the architect and we then sat down and talked it through," says Reggie. "Starting from scratch gave me the licence to have everything exactly as I wanted, which was one of the great things about this project."

The cutting-edge interiors have a pared back industrial feel, with exposed brickwork, grey timber flooring and a contemporary cantilevered open-tread staircase. "Moving the staircase was one of the most important changes we made," says Reggie. "When I

Below: Brick slips were used to clad one wall of the living/dining space for an industrial feel.



bought the house the stairs essentially began just inside the front door, which felt cramped and awkward."

Positioning the new staircase further down the hallway freed up space for a cloakroom on the ground floor and a cupboard for the water tank. To the rear, one of the bedrooms is currently being used as Reggie's study, where new bifold doors have been installed opening onto the deck of the enclosed back garden. Behind the desk a feature wall of wooden planks is in fact photo-realistic wallpaper.

"It's a really cheeky little cheat, and we used a similar trick for the exposed brickwork on the upper floors, which are actually slim brick slips which have a beautiful



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distressed finish,” explains Reggie. This brickwork cladding runs up behind the gravity-defying cantilevered timber staircase, serving as a contrast to the grey-painted treads. Designed and built by Churchill Restoration, the stair treads are supported on structural steelwork, sunk into the wall, with a simple glass balustrade.

The principal bedroom on the newly constructed mezzanine level has been carved out of the existing loft space and also features a glass balustrade. One drawback to this loft conversion was the reduction in storage space, which has been amply replaced by masses of built-in cupboards and drawers throughout the 140 sq m four-storey house.

Above: Removing walls and relocating the staircase has created a much more open-plan space on the first floor. The dining table was made to Reggie's own design.



Reggie uses the ground-floor bedroom as a study, and has introduced bifold doors opening out onto the deck.

A designated dressing room on the second floor features floor-to-ceiling storage, with a glass case taking pride of place in the centre of the room which is used by Reggie as an unusual display space for his shoes.

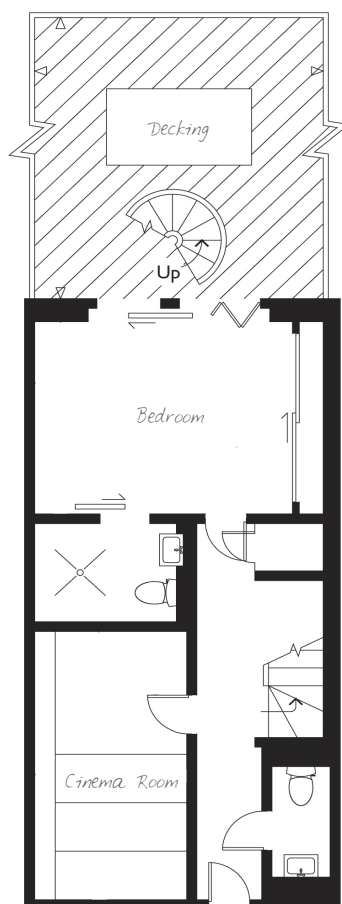
"I knew that I had way too many shoes, so I definitely needed somewhere to house them, and that shoe box is an easy way of seeing what you've got when you're in a hurry to get ready," he says. "I sourced the old haberdashery unit, which would have contained material in drawers, and Churchill sprayed it black to match the fitted wardrobes."

Beside this dressing area an open-plan bathroom with a roll top bath, metro tiles and wood panelling creates a boutique hotel feel. Removing existing walls has produced a similar wow factor in the living/dining/kitchen on the first floor.

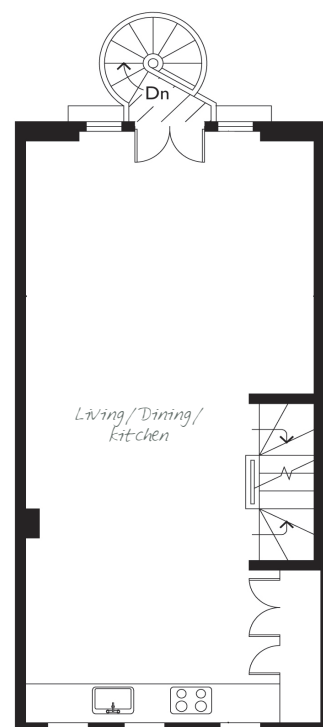
"There was a strange little corridor that made the place quite dark, and the wall between this and the kitchen was also taken down, which lets a lot

The floorplan

The ground floor contains a guest cloakroom to one side of the entrance hall and to the other side the garage has been converted into a home cinema. To the rear is an office/guest bedroom, with an en suite shower room and folding doors to the garden. The first floor contains an open-plan living/dining/kitchen and on the second floor is a bedroom with en suite shower room to the front. To the rear is a spectacular principal suite over two floors, comprising a double-height dressing area with an open-plan bathroom and a bedroom on the mezzanine within the newly converted loft.



GROUND FLOOR



FIRST FLOOR



more light in," says Reggie. "It's a more free-flowing layout now and has become a much nicer space."

An industrial-looking metal kitchen was top of Reggie's wish list, and Churchill sourced images and prices from which to choose. The cantilevered staircase was also an important feature. "I've always wanted one," Reggie explains. "An incredible carpenter

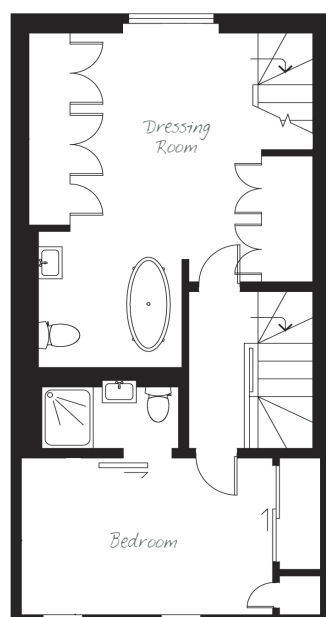
Above: The new home cinema in the former garage has comfortable stepped seating and practical built-in storage.

used the same hardwood as the flooring to create the steps which are cantilevered off steel beams."

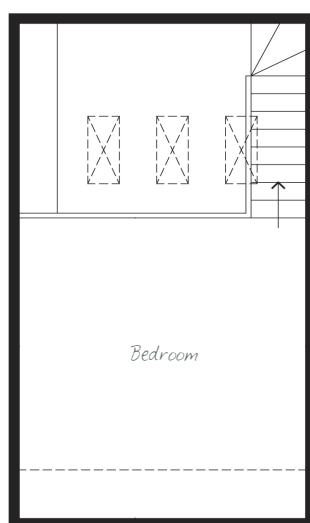
In fact, several pieces in the house were made bespoke, including doors, cupboards and even the hefty wooden-topped dining table, where Reggie and his friends frequently gather to play board games. "We're pretty rock and roll," he jokes, "and my girlfriend and I are a crack Articulate team!"

Not only does the house look fantastic but Reggie, his architect and builder all ensured that it was designed for the future, and the whole building has been rewired with CAT-6 cabling and an integral Sonos sound system throughout. Speakers are flush with the ceilings and hidden from view to retain the minimal feel.

"The exterior hasn't really changed but it's like a completely different house inside, and is really well put together," says Reggie, who admits that he stayed hands-off when it came to the building process. "I'm a great believer in letting the experts get on with it."



SECOND FLOOR



THIRD FLOOR

FACT FILE

Contacts

► PROJECT

Designer Tony Michael Consulting: 07768 278222, tonymichaelconsulting.co.uk

Building contractor Churchill Restoration Ltd: churchillrestoration.co.uk

► FIXTURES & FITTINGS

Scrapwood wallpaper Tom Dixon: tomdixon.net

Music system Sonos: sonos.com

Timber dining table Jeremy Pitts: jeremypitts.co.uk



“Be bold. With every house I’ve owned I’ve become a little bit braver in terms of how far I’m willing to push ideas.”

But despite the fact that the mews house has only been completed for around a year, Reggie is already planning his next move. “I have tons of ideas and I’m discussing it all day every day with my girlfriend,” he says. “I’ve always been that way – for me property is amazing fun, so once you’ve done a project why not do it all again? There’s nothing better than coming home to a place you love – it’s the best feeling in the world.”

FINANCE

THE BOTTOM LINE

Reggie paid £595,000 for the mews house in February 2012 and has completely remodelled the property, which is currently valued at £1.25m.

Home truths

What was the high point of the project?

Working with such a professional team has been fantastic, and watching the house develop. It’s amazing to have an idea and see it come to life.

...and the low point?

The only problem was my impatience because I was so excited to move in – especially towards the end when I could see it all coming together!

Your favourite feature?

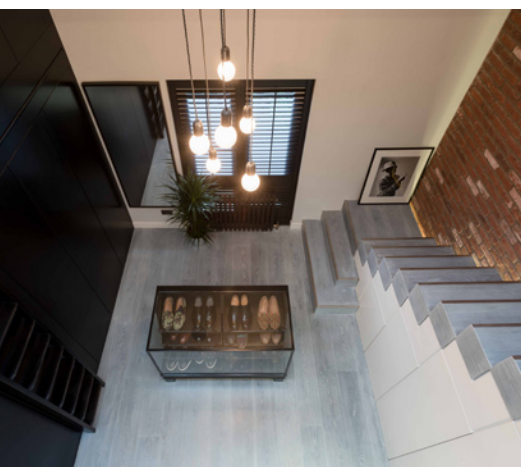
The thing I was most excited about was my dining table, which I had in my head as a design and was made bespoke. It’s exactly as I’d hoped.

PICTURE: PHIL TAYLOR





An old haberdashery unit has been sprayed black to match the fitted wardrobes and is used to display Reggie's shoes.



Pictures: Converting the former loft into a mezzanine level with a glass balustrade has created a stunning principal bedroom, with the new staircase incorporating practical storage. Grey stained hardwood flooring was laid throughout the second floor, where an open-plan bathroom has been fitted with a roll top bath, a high-level toilet cistern and a vintage-style sink.

