

Dublin 6 €795,000

# Modern, mellow mews in Ranelagh

Detached two-bed by the Grand Canal in Ranelagh has the living space upstairs to maximise light and space

**22 Dartmouth Walk, Ranelagh, Dublin 6**

**Description:** Detached two-bed by the Grand Canal in Ranelagh has the living space upstairs to maximise light and space  
**Agent:** Mullery O'Gara

**JOYCE HICKEY**

"My nieces and nephews call this the 'uppy-downy' house," says the owner of 22 Dartmouth Walk, a detached mews house built in 2008 on a residential lane that runs parallel to the Grand Canal in Ranelagh, Dublin 6. The nickname refers to its flipped layout, with the two bedrooms at ground level and a light-filled, open-plan, dual-aspect living area upstairs.

Being up a level ensures a connection with the canal rather than the roadside, says award-winning architect Amanda Bone, who designed this "special" house.

Known for her efficient, practical, uncluttered aesthetic, she acknowledges the challenge of building between extant mews houses in a conservation area to the rear of a protected structure, with planning conditions including accessibility, storage, car parking and window specifications. "It makes for a better project to have constraints such as a difficult context to work in," says Bone. "Strict regulations help you break problems down and come up with solutions."

The house fits together as a seamless interior while connecting effortlessly with outdoors. The facade, clad in Wicklow granite, is punctuated with beautifully detailed iroko hardwood windows and screens, and the large front door opens into a reception area with low storage tucked against the original garden wall.

Walking in, away from the canal with its fringe of tall way grasses, your eye is drawn immediately along the hall to the south-facing patio garden, visible and accessible through a full-height glass screen and door with rich iroko frames.

Downstairs is floored in a pale industrial-grade epoxy resin, with light-reflecting qualities and heating underneath adding to the feeling of calm. "It is warm all year here," says



the owner, who gets most of her hot water from the solar panels and has added more insulation over the years to warrant a Ber of C2.

To the right of the hall are two double bedrooms, both with built-in wardrobes, and between them are a utility cupboard and two near-identical bathrooms fitted with timeless white subway tiles, marble ledges, wall-hung sanitary ware and neat niches for bottles.

The front bedroom has a long, high window affording privacy; the bright, restful larger bedroom at the rear has a wall of glass with a door to the well-tended suntrap outside.

This is planted around the edges and screened from the houses on Dartmouth Square, to the rear, by a line of trees along the wall; an outside tap is fed by rainwater stored in a tank under the flagstones.

There is a key point at which Bone's desired connection between inside and outside becomes ingeniously apparent. To go upstairs, you walk almost to the garden, whereupon you turn your back on it and ascend the iroko steps, which are lit by a huge glass-topped slot and offer more glimpses of sky through the upstairs front windows. When you get to the top, you can still see the garden

through the glass at the bottom. The design elements are evident and yet restrained; into the wall alongside the steps is cut a discreet notch that continues around the rooms as a kind of inverse skirting.

There is painstaking work in the window frames and panels at each end of the room, specified by Bone and executed by McNally Joinery. At the living-room end, a wood-burning stove slots into the wall, with bookshelves and low-profile storage above and below the stone hearth and ledge. At the kitchen end is a line of white handleless cupboards, and an island is wrapped in the iroko

boards that floor the space. A pull-down ladder gives access to the large attic.

Against this warmly neutral backdrop, the owner has created a characterful home with a considered blend of heirloom furniture, mid-century pieces and low-key finesse. It was a very collaborative project, she says, praising Bone's adventurous flair for maximising light throughout the 104sq m (1,120sq ft) property. "If I could

pick up this house and move it, I would."

Number 22 Dartmouth Walk – beside Charlemont Luas stop and the neighbourly Dartmouth Square, and a short walk from Ranelagh village and the city centre – is on the market through Mullery O'Gara, with an asking price of €795,000. Amanda Bone is a judge on the RTE series Home of the Year, of which the final will be broadcast on April 4th.

Dublin 8 €570,000

# No corners cut at renovated redbrick

**1 Tower Villas, Kilmainham Lane, Dublin 8**

**Description:** Interesting B-rated property has three levels and a striking Victorian spiral staircase from kitchen to back garden  
**Agent:** Owen Reilly

**JESSICA DOYLE**

You know an area is trendy when you see beanie-clad residents walking their greyhounds at lunchtime. Add tourists on their way to Kilmainham Gaol and the Irish Museum of Modern Art, both across the road, and you will conjure up the atmosphere of Kilmainham Lane on a sunny March day, where number one Tower Villas sits at the end of a row of four seemingly identical red-brick terraces.

The owner of number one didn't cut any corners when he undertook a full renovation of this property after buying it for €140,000 in 2015, according to the Property Price Register.

The Victorian property looks charming but deceptively modest from the outside with a bespoke hardwood front door. Off to the right of the hallway on the ground floor is an open-plan living/dining room. The rooms had originally been separated but the owner opened it up during the renovation in which the entire home was gutted. He salvaged some of the original ceiling cornicing in order to have the same design imitated to remain faithful to the heritage of the home. The large black cast-iron fireplace was salvaged and restored, creating a gorgeous feature. The room also benefits from warm solid maple wood floors and high decorative skirting boards. The sash window,

looking on to the street was, like the front door, custom-made with hardwood and has decorative and functional plantation shutters.

Beyond that, going toward the back of the property, is the dining area, which can comfortably fit a six-seater table. The bright, contemporary kitchen is in the top storey of the rear extension with views of the space beyond: currently consisting of trees with back gardens in the distance, creating a sense of space. There is also a rectangular roof light forming most of the ceiling, flooding the room with light. The kitchen has bespoke white wooden handleless units with a six-ring gas hob and integrated Neff ovens.

Off the kitchen is a real design highlight of this house; a Victorian cast-iron balcony and spiral staircase which leads to the garden at basement level. The staircase was salvaged from a home in Leeds in the



UK, dismantled and brought to Ireland.

Downstairs, at basement level, the main bathroom is situated to the front of the house. This room was excavated from

the earth during the renovation. The understairs area has been fitted with storage cupboards.

Next to that is a small windowless room in which the own-

er has a big comfy sofa, movie posters and a big TV, making it a great den. Next to that is a double bedroom, with a smaller bedroom at the end of the hall. There is also access to the back garden from here, which is paved with stone tiles with a teal fence around it for privacy.

The main bedroom, on the top floor of the house, is flooded with light from two Velux windows in the sloped roof. There is plenty of space for built-in wardrobes, under-eaves storage and an en suite shower room.

The extensive works on this home included replumbing, rewiring, replastering and the fitting of insulation and double-glazed windows throughout. The property's Ber is now an impressive B2.

Looking to take on a new project with a Victorian property elsewhere in the city, the owner is selling this unique offering through Owen Reilly, seeking €570,000.

## On view



**28 Cremorne, Knocklyon, Dublin 16**

€695,000, DNG  
Detached four-bedroom house extending to 150sq m (1,615sq ft). Located in a mature family-orientated development, the property, dating from 1977, has an east-facing garden that offers potential to extend and a garage that could be converted – subject to planning, Ber G  
On View: By appointment at dng.ie



**15 Proby Park, Barnhill Road, Dalkey, Co Dublin**

€650,000, Lisney Sotheby's International Realty  
Four-bedroom mid-terrace house extending to 103sq m (1,109sq ft). Constructed in the early 1990s and located close to the heritage village of Dalkey, the townhouse has a low-maintenance west-facing back garden extending to 11m in length, and parking for two cars out front. Ber B3  
On View: By appointment at lisney.com



**3 Sefton, Dún Laoghaire, Co Dublin**

€945,000, Sherry FitzGerald  
Detached four-bedroom house extending to 170sq m (1,830sq ft). Located in a quiet cul-de-sac of just nine homes, it has bespoke joinery and a third reception room now laid out as a home office, overlooking the front garden. Ber C3  
On View: By appointment at sherryfitz.ie



**29 Coolkill, Sandyford, Dublin 18**

€895,000, Mark Kelly & Associates  
Detached five-bedroom house extending to 173sq m (1,862sq ft). Located in a well-established estate, the house occupies a corner site so there is potential for further development – subject to planning. It benefits from a south-facing aspect and has a block-built garage. Ber E1  
On View: By appointment at mkproperty.ie



**3 Palmerstown Hall, Dominick Street Upper, Dublin 7**

€230,000, Sherry FitzGerald  
One-bedroom apartment extending to 38sq m (409sq ft). Located on the ground floor, the unit has a south-facing aspect and a communal roof terrace within a secure contemporary development. Ber E2  
On View: By appointment at sherryfitz.ie

## Sort it

Denise O'Connor



# Make the most of your attic space

Converting your attic is a great way to add some extra living space and increase the value of your home. But attic conversions are also among the most commonly botched home renovation projects. Despite being less complex than constructing an extension, they are fraught with potential problems when not done correctly. So before you jump into this exciting renovation project here are some of the most common mistakes I've seen and the solutions that will help you to get the most out of your attic conversion project.

### Check your headroom

One of the biggest mistakes I see in attic conversions is insufficient headroom. This is a common issue because attics are often smaller than other rooms in the house and have sloping roofs. If you don't have enough headroom you won't be able to call the space a habitable room when you come to sell. Depending on the size of your attic space, you may also find that the finished room will feel cramped and uncomfortable.

To avoid this problem you'll need to determine if your attic has sufficient headroom for a suitable living space. To qualify as a habitable room you will need a floor-to-ceiling height of at least 2.4m in 50 per cent of the usable space. This means you can call it an extra bedroom when selling your home. If you need clarification on whether or not your attic meets this requirement it's worth getting a professional opinion before proceeding with any plans.

### Do you need planning permission?

Another common mistake in attic conversions is not maximising the space to avoid going for planning permission. It might be tempting to rule out any work that requires planning permission to save time. But the three months you'll need to wait for your approval isn't a lot in the long run. Especially if it makes the difference between having a habitable room or not. So don't be put off by planning. Yes, you are opening yourself up to opinions from neighbours and there is a risk involved, but compromising to avoid it is not wise.

If you plan to raise the roof or add any windows to the front or side you will likely need planning permission. Skylights at the rear of the property do not require planning permission but a dormer window will. It's always best to check with your local planning authority before commencing any work.

### Consult a structural engineer

A third mistake I often see in attic conversions is not considering the floor's weight-bearing capacity. Attic floors are not usually designed to support the weight of furniture and people, so if you plan to use the space as a bedroom or living area you will need to reinforce the floor. Reinforcement can be done by adding support beams or joists to the existing structure. It's essential to have a structural engineer assess the load-bearing

capacity of your attic floor before you start your project to ensure that it can support the weight of your new space.

The structural engineer will also ensure that the work is carried out in accordance with building regulations. A certificate of compliance is required to certify that the work has been completed satisfactorily. When you come to sell the property these documents will be required so it's essential to get them in order.

### Design your staircase

One of the most significant mistakes I see in attic conversions is not considering the design of the staircase. When designing a staircase for an attic it is essential to ensure that it provides easy access while also complying with building regulations for safety and accessibility standards.

The stairs should allow comfortable access to the attic room without feeling cramped or constrained. This includes requirements for the height and width of steps and handrail and balustrade specifications.

Spiral staircases are the first thing that spring to mind, especially where space is tight, but they do take up a lot of floor area so they aren't always the best option. Remember that getting things up and down from your attic space with a spiral staircase will not be straightforward. Ideally the staircase leading up to the attic should feel like a natural continuation of the existing staircase so it doesn't feel like an afterthought. The more seamless the transition, the more cohesive your home will feel.

### Layout

Finally, one of the biggest mistakes I see in attic conversions is not maximising the attic space. Attics can be tricky spaces to design because of their sloping roofs and unusual shapes. However, a successful design should eliminate any awkward leftover areas.

Utilise low, under-eave spaces for storage and ensure they are accessible. Consider built-in drawers instead of doors for easy access.

If you're planning an ensuite, consider headroom carefully. Toilets and baths can be placed in the lower part of the space, but basins and showers will need good headroom. Wall-hung basins and WCs are a good option as they need to be built out, allowing for recessed storage above, as well as giving the illusion of more space.



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