

# *An Essential Guide for Property Refurbishment*





Over the past few years, homeowners renovating their properties spent an average of £23,100, which sounds like a lot of money until you think about how much value you could add by making changes to your home.

How, though, do you go about renovating a home, especially if it isn't something you've done before? Here, we look at the six steps you need to take to make sure things go well from the start.

# 1. WHAT DO YOU WANT TO ACHIEVE?



When you have decided to carry out renovations, it's natural to want to do everything at once. If you do, however, you are likely to end up with lots of unfinished projects and living in chaos.

Instead, try to take some time to think about what matters most to you. Think about how you live in your current home and what rooms you use most often. Do you need to make any rooms multifunctional?

Once you've done this you can prioritise rooms or projects and start to think about how you can get the work done. Setting out clear outlines and objectives is a good place to start.

At Justin Lloyd the team have lots of experience in discussing initial plans with clients to help them find a starting point and what their end goal is. Perhaps book in an initial consultation or property visit with Justin Lloyd, to really focus on what you would like to achieve.



## 2. SET A BUDGET



Renovations and remodelling costs money (we've already seen how much the average homeowner doing renovations spends). Some projects, however, are more expensive than others and how much you have to spend will go a long way to determining just what you can do.

How do you set a budget for home renovations and where do you start? A good idea is to visit some retailers such as Howdens, B&Q, Homebase etc. The kitchen and bathroom will be a main focus, pay particular attention to: the type of suite you want; what worktop you'd like; do you want built-in appliances; tiles or a splashback; lighting is also important as well as flooring and making sure this goes with the general aesthetic. Think about whether you want fittings that are built to last, in this case the cheaper options may not be the best choice. However, if you are looking to stay on trend and change things up occasionally then you'll likely not want to go for the most costly options. The bathroom suite you'll likely not want to change anytime soon so going with a neutral white suite and paying a bit more may be preferable to ensure it lasts.

Remember to add in a contingency to cover unexpected costs. We've helped many clients with their refurbishments where the contractors have uncovered hidden issues after removing the old fittings. For example, rotten floorboards in bathrooms caused by years of small amounts of water getting through sealant gaps, or because of slow leaks around appliance plumbing etc. All these issues add cost as well as time.



### 3. Timelines

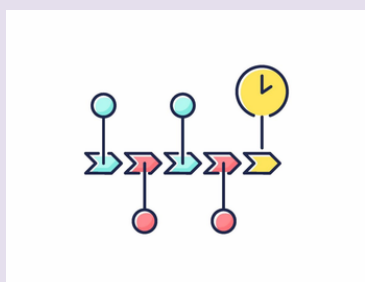


Most property owners want to complete refurbishment works in the shortest possible timescale, but it is still worth thinking about a deadline and planning thoroughly to try and avoid works over-running. We have helped clients project manage their home improvements and make sure they are completed in time for occasions such as Christmas or any special events they have coming up. Project managing home improvements can be extremely stressful, so it is worth speaking to our refurbishment project manager at Justin Lloyd to see how we can help.

Other aspects to consider are contractor's and professional's lead times. If you are going to be managing the project yourself, ensure to set time aside each day to make sure all materials and trades are lined up to arrive in the right order. In addition, make sure you research lead times on new kitchens and bathroom suites as well as tiles, doors, carpets etc.

Speaking with our team at Justin Lloyd will help you to start road-mapping your refurbishment works and put in place some realistic timescales.

Throughout the project we can also provide weekly progress reviews to make sure you are aware of what stage everything is at.



## 4. Seek help / decide who does what



Depending on the size of the project you want to undertake, and just how much experience you have with DIY, you may need to ask for expert help. This might be as simple as visiting a showroom and asking them to help you design a bathroom or kitchen for you or enlisting the help of an architect to redesign your living space.

Once the plans are in place, you'll need to decide whether you need more help to do the work or if you can do it yourself. The latter is the cheaper option, but only if you have the skills to do the work well; if you don't, longer-term, it could end up costing you a lot more. If you decide to use contractors you'll want to make sure you have a contract in place that clearly outlines what they will do, when they will do it by and what it will cost, this way if there are any issues, they should be easy to resolve.



Many of our clients are time poor and understand they are not an expert when it comes to managing a refurbishment project which in itself can add unnecessary delays should they wish to self-manage the project. Our contractors are tried and tested over years of working together. They understand what our clients want as well as making sure they advise what's needed to be compliant. In addition, professional contractors have the qualifications and experience to ensure a great finish, as well as public liability insurance in case of any issues that may arise.

# 5. PLANNING PERMISSION & LEGALS



## Planning

Some work, such as refitting a bathroom or kitchen, won't need planning permission. Home extensions and garage conversions probably will.

Make sure you check what is needed with your local authority and get any planning permission in place before you begin work; if not, you risk having to undo what you've had done.

## Compliance

Depending on the extent and scale of the refurbishment there may be compliance certificates issued to confirm work has been carried out by a qualified contractor. For example, if any electrical work has been carried out this will need to be signed off by a trained and certified electrician and signed off by them confirming work has been carried out in line with current safety regulations. It is worth requesting an Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR) from the contractor which will show the property as electrically safe.

Any work carried out by plumbers also needs certification to show it has been carried to a safe and compliant standard. If you are going to be renting the property having a gas safety certificate in place is an annual requirement, but it is also good practice to have this in place regardless. An annual service is also recommended for new boilers to keep the boiler running well and this is a requirement for many warranty or insurance policies.

If new windows have been installed you will be given a FENSA certificate. Keep this safe as we find many clients run into issues when trying to sell a property for which they cannot locate this, and the above certification for works carried out to the property.

There is a lot to think about when it comes to compliance and legalities, all of which will be looked after by your Justin Lloyd property manager.



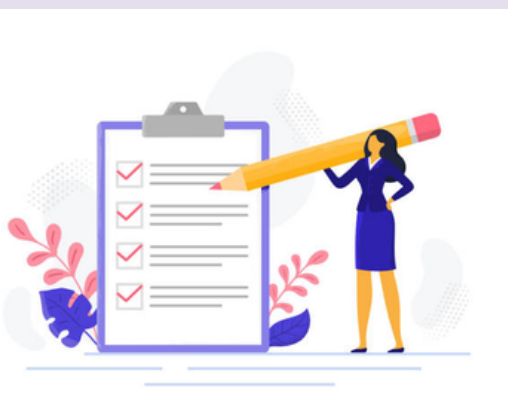
## 6. Snagging, payment & final details



One of the most important, and often most stressful elements of managing a refurbishment can be when the time comes to make a final visit to the property when you've been told works are complete. Contractors will have sent the final invoice and be expecting the final balance to be paid promptly. Often, when we visit a homeowner to value their property for sale or rental, we hear that the client had problems getting contractors to revisit and rectify any issues following works. When we manage a project, our property manager finds it a useful practise to hold an agreed amount of money back, to be paid after we have visited the property and raised any works that need to be finished or put right. However, It is important for this to be discussed with the contractors at the start so that they know to expect a full handover process. This also avoids any difficult conversations or conflict at the final stages. The Justin Lloyd refurbishment team will manage this whole process.

Once your renovations are complete and any final snagging issues have been addressed you may well be left with blank walls and a blank slate when it comes to decorations, unless this was included in your original specification of works of course. As with the renovation itself, you need to think through what you want to do here and how much you have to spend.

Look at the shape and size of your rooms and choose paint colours, furniture and furnishings that make the most of the space; if a room is small for example, choose light paint colours and simple designs.





# Example One

After many years and multiple tenancies, this two bedroom apartment needed a new kitchen with a general refurbishment throughout to include flooring. The owner is a long term client of Justin Lloyd and asked us to manage the whole process from start to finish, including choosing fittings as well as the general style.

- The total cost of refurbishment works was approximately £18,000.
- The property value was increased by £25,000, which meant an instant return on investment if the property was to be sold.
- The rent was £950 per month pre works and £1150 per month, an increase of over 21%. In addition, the property was let quickly following the works, due to it being a superior apartment to others on the market while available.

Before		After
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very dated</li> <li>• Old style appliances / no extractor fan above hob causing excess condensation adding to mould build up</li> </ul>	<h2>Kitchen</h2>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New appliances</li> <li>• Wall and base unit carcasses and doors replaced with extra cupboard space created</li> <li>• New modern wall tiles, flooring and decoration</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suite was fine and functional</li> <li>• Tile effect vinyl flooring pitted with some tears</li> </ul>	<h2>Bathroom</h2>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flooring replaced in a more modern style</li> <li>• Bath panel replaced</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tired flooring throughout</li> <li>• Decoration throughout worn</li> </ul>	<h2>Additional works</h2>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fully redecorated including walls and wood work</li> <li>• Flooring replaced throughout</li> </ul>



# Example Two

This period conversion was in need of updating. We had managed the tenancy for our client for many years and were asked to project manage refurbishment works in between tenancies.

- Cost of refurbishment was £20,000 approx.
- Rental income was £1300 per month pre refurbishment and £1800 per month following the refurbishment .
- This equates to over a 38% increase in monthly rental income.

Before		After
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In place over 15 years</li> <li>• Dated wooden units</li> <li>• Old and temperamental appliances</li> </ul>	<h2>Kitchen</h2>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fully refitted, same layout</li> <li>• Modern style units and worktop</li> <li>• New flooring / decoration</li> <li>• New appliances</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In place over 15 years</li> <li>• Dated suite, flooring, wall tiles and decoration</li> </ul>	<h2>Bathroom</h2>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• White modern suite fitted with shower screen</li> <li>• New flooring</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carpets fraying and worn in principle rooms</li> <li>• Decoration (walls and woodwork) tired throughout</li> </ul>	<h2>Additional works</h2>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Neutral carpets fitted throughout</li> <li>• Fully redecorated</li> </ul>



[CLICK HERE](#) for a virtual walkthrough of the property

hello@justinlloyd.co.uk 01273 692424

# Example Three

This bespoke refurbishment was one we project managed on behalf of a client requiring certain fittings and a particular finish. The property is a modern building on Brighton seafront so as well as making sure the client received the finish they were happy with, everyone was also keen on maintaining a modern and contemporary feel to suit the building in general.

Unlike examples 1 and 2, this refurbishment was not to increase its value. So it was important for us to sit down with the client and talk in depth around their requirements, so that our property manager could work effectively when managing works.

Before		After
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In place over 20 years and somewhat dated</li> <li>Various repairs needed</li> </ul>	<h2>Kitchen</h2>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Full re-fit with new appliances and lighting</li> <li>bespoke glass splashback designed and coloured to match décor</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Original bathroom and en-suite with dated décor and flooring</li> </ul>	<h2>Bathroom</h2>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fully re-designed and fitted to meet clients specific needs</li> <li>Bespoke fittings installed</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Property was in average condition throughout however client required certain design</li> </ul>	<h2>Additional works</h2>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All new decoration/flooring and lighting throughout</li> <li>Heated skirting installed</li> </ul>



# Get in touch

01273 692424

hello@justinlloyd.co.uk



Our property refurbishment department is located in our Brighton office. Whatever stage you are at with your project why not pop in and speak to our project manager about any questions or ideas you have around your home renovations. Or feel free to call or email, one of the Justin Lloyd team will be more than happy to help.



hello@justinlloyd.co.uk 01273 692424