

CHRISTINE YORATH

Interior designer, property guru and now City Dweller Magazine columnist talks to us about her experiences and why you should put in the extra effort to love your home.



BEFORE



AFTER



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I have been a Leeds property owner for 45 years and my experience spans being an owner occupier, a landlady, a developer, an interior designer and the owner and founder of Flats In Leeds, a lettings agency in which I sold to Countrywide in 2013.

In those years I have seen and been in more properties than I could even begin to estimate.

Recently I have been conducting a 'flat search' for a second home for a London buyer and I have been viewing mostly in the £300k to £500k price band. I am shocked at how many people spend so much money buying a flat then leave it just as it is, even if the kitchen and flooring dates back to the last century.

There are so many ways of enhancing an interior and adding value as well as individualising a home. I agree such works don't come cheap but why spend half a million pounds on the bricks and mortar and just "make do"? I would rather spend £450k and make it into a fabulous space to live in with great comfort and lots of storage. The same applies to much less expensive flats and houses and whether for rental or owner occupation.

Three years ago I refurbished a two bed flat in the Quays and the rent increased from £750pcm to £1500 pcm and just a few months ago I did a mini make over to a two

bed flat in Clarence dock completing it in less than a week and then it let quickly with an increase in rent of 35%.

Even if you're not letting the property but have bought it to live in then surely after such a big investment its worth loving? Sometimes it's only when my clients see the difference between before and after do they realise what they've been missing.

Before you start any refurbishment it's essential to plan a programme and decide how you want to live in a space and that's what I always do with my clients, I get to know them and how they want to use the property, what their lifestyle is, what's important to them; the rest is easy.

If you decide to work with a designer it's a good idea to have a collection of images of styles you like, even if the properties are different to your own or if the scale is different as variations can be made. Be clear on budget and what you want to spend then enjoy the whole process of starting to love your home.

For more information go to www.christineyorath.com or get in touch by emailing christine@yorathgroup.com or ringing 07836 737300.

*Till next time,
Christine*



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