



Boathouse back to its best

After December's catastrophic floods spilled over its balcony, the iconic Duke of Portland Boathouse on Ullswater has undergone a stunning renovation by its Carlisle owner Julia Hogarth

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The boathouse comes with a
quarter of a mile of lakeshore
with fishing rights



The boathouse has an open plan layout, with a living area opening onto the bedroom then the balcony beyond



Julia Hogarth bought the property with her husband David in 2010



The artwork says it all. Almost every framed drawing, print and photograph on the freshly painted walls of the Duke of Portland Boathouse on

Ullswater is an image of the Duke of Portland Boathouse on Ullswater.

"It is one of the most photographed buildings in the Lake District," says its owner Julia Hogarth, who never has to spend long in a local antiques shop or gallery before coming across a sketch or snap of her iconic bolthole.

"People send us things they've found, or even made themselves," she says, pointing to a recent acquisition - a colourful feltwork depiction of the boathouse. "We even have a 1,000-piece Duke of Portland Boathouse jigsaw puzzle."

She says this while balancing on the back of the leather sofa, hanging a large print of a mist-swathed boathouse by the photographer David Ball. It's the finishing touch that marks the end of a five-month-long, £80,000 refurbishment of the boathouse, which was inundated

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The living space includes a kitchen area with breakfast bar





during the December 2015 floods by rising lake water sloshing over its balcony.

“Even though this is the smallest property I’ve decorated, it’s been the most intense project I’ve done,” says Julia, co-owner with her husband, David, of Lakes Cottage Holidays. “It has given me an opportunity to put my stamp on the place.”

When a building’s exterior creates such a striking impression – so striking that it lures motorists to stop their cars on a rather sharp bend of the A592 to take ‘that’ shot – a designer has her work cut out to make the interior meet expectations. Julia has achieved it with a modern rustic scheme, which uses natural materials and earthy colours to complement the imposing oak cruck beams and arch-shaped doors that, mercifully, survived the flood.

“I wanted it to respect the history of the building,” says the Wetheral-based designer, explaining that the Victorian structure was built on 17th-century foundations for the 3rd Duke of Portland. “But I’ve added contemporary touches to give it a ‘wow’ factor.”

That word unequivocally springs to mind upon entering this open-plan living space, whose most priceless feature is the Ullswater view spilling through French doors at the far end. It draws you through the kitchen/sitting area towards the

balcony – completely rebuilt after its support struts were washed away – with its view across the lake towards Askham Fell.

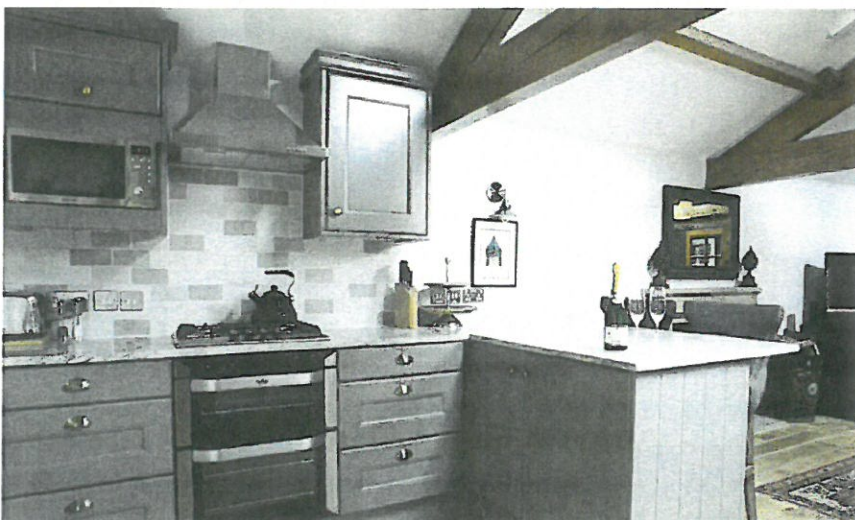
Immediately behind the French doors is the bedroom, where an elegant slipper bath from M. C. Ferguson in Penrith sits at the foot of a king-size bed from the Warwick Road Bed Centre. A window above the bath lets in more light, from sun and moon. “We get beautiful sunrises and magical starry nights because there’s no street lighting,” Julia says. One imagines that the plush padded headboard behind the bed makes savouring those views even more tempting.

The abundance of light bouncing off the water has enabled Julia to make bold colour choices. Mirroring the grey tones of the pure wool curtains made by Kath’s Curtains of Carlisle (using plaid by Moon of North Yorkshire), the bedroom walls are painted in a rich dark grey.

“It’s Mole’s Breath, by Farrow & Ball,” says Julia, who used F&B’s All White on the ceiling and pale-grey Ammonite in the living area. “I chose Mole’s Breath because it’s a fashionable, deep grey that doesn’t make the room dark or cold. I love the quality and depth of pigment that you get with Farrow & Ball paints; I never use anything else.”

She chose the same warm grey to paint the doors of the bespoke fitted

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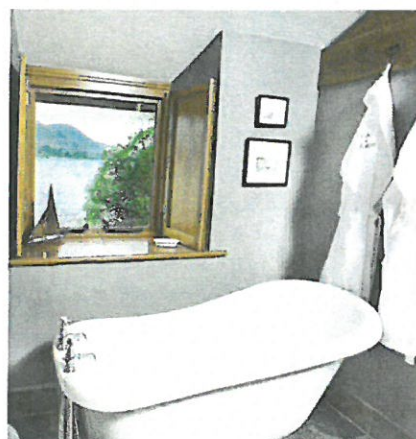


The new kitchen is fully equipped, with granite worktops, LPG oven and hob, microwave, dishwasher and fridge





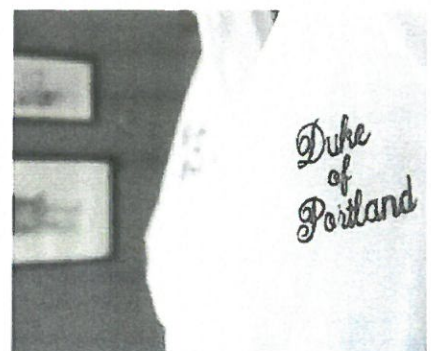
The bedroom has a slipper bath with its own view of Ullswater



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kitchen by Ideal Living Interiors of Harker, Carlisle. The kitchen is one of the biggest changes made during the refurbishment - since buying the property in 2010, the Hogarths have been making do with a two-ring hob and microwave. Gone also is the dining table, replaced by a sparkling Lakeland Granite breakfast bar with boho buttoned-back bar stools. The cooker runs on LPG gas, as does the hot-water system and underfloor heating.

"We have no services here: that's why the refurbishment was so challenging," she explains. "A new generator runs twice a day and charges up a bank of batteries beneath the boatshed. And we have a licence to draw water from the lake, which is purified into drinking water." Another new feature is the hotel-style bathroom, with its spacious shower cubicle and rain shower. Modern white fittings gleam against colourful, slate-effect porcelain tiles - also used beneath



Double doors open from the bedroom onto the balcony, which has views across the lake to Askham Fell



the slipper bath in the bedroom - which are very much in keeping with Julia's elemental approach to materials. Engineered oak flooring and a plump, tan leather sofa in the woodburner-warmed living area give the feel of a country gent's retreat - a fun-loving, twinkly-eyed country gent, judging by some of the quirky furniture that Julia has sourced. A bookcase shaped like a rowing boat; a coffee table that looks like a trunk; an oar suspended above the doorway connecting the living room with the bedroom. All reminders that this is a holiday home, a place for messing about by the water, which has its own slipway, jetty and fishing rights for a quarter of a mile along the shore.

For Julia, who glimpsed this boathouse on many a childhood holiday and now has the pleasure of sharing it with her own daughters and grandchildren, the boathouse finally lives up to the impression it first made on her.

"I used to think it was a fairytale dream cottage. It feels a bit unbelievable to be here."

The Duke of Portland Boathouse is available to rent from Lakes Cottage Holidays (01768 774060, lakescottageholiday.co.uk).



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