

House Doctor



Gullwing Select Beech Prices: From £3000. Sigma 3 showrooms at Colchester Avenue, Cardiff, Culverhouse Cross, Cardiff, Swansea and Newport. www.sigma3.co.uk

House Doctors

Prescribing a cure for the housing jitters



Box Canvases Prices: From £17 for packs of 10
www.dcmk.co.uk

With the media full of news of the credit crunch and the uncertain housing market, more than ever sellers need to give their house the 'wow factor' in order to clinch the deal. Welsh Living has teamed up with property and interiors experts to give you advice on how to achieve style on a shoestring and make your home stand out from the unsold crowd.

Over the next few pages, interior designer Deborah Drew of BBC's DIY SOS and estate agent Andrew Gregory of The Property Megastore explain where to save and where to splurge in these tight times in order to maximize the resale value of your home.

The Kitchen

"In a recent survey 71 per cent of estate agents said that money spent on a new

kitchen ranks as the most worthwhile improvement to a home and I'd have to agree. The kitchen is the hub of the modern home and in the current climate a kitchen that impresses can be the biggest factor in achieving the best price for a property. When looking to add the 'wow' factor to this most important of rooms, it's important to remember that value for money isn't necessarily about the cheapest upfront cost but about balancing this against quality. A kitchen such as this one by Sigma 3 shows that a truly impressive kitchen doesn't have to cost the earth and really can pay off in the long term. Research from the Cheshire Building Society shows that adding a new kitchen can add as much as £10,000 to the value of your house, and this kitchen starts from just £3000 and is guaranteed to impress potential buyers."



Towels dyed with Dylon Prices: Available in a range of 24 colours priced from £5.49 Woolworths, Wilkinsons, John Lewis, haberdasheries, hardware and craft stores across Wales. You can call 01737 742010 to find your nearest stockist

Deborah said:

"Try the bold colours of Typhoon's funky storage jars to give your kitchen some retro appeal; they are inexpensive and sure to be noticed."

The Master Bedroom

Andrew said:

"If the master bedroom feels homely and buyers feel they can be comfortable there, then this room is second only to the kitchen in sealing the deal. The key to shoestring success in this room is having a feature wall which catches the eye. Remember the colour scheme you choose is going to be the first thing you see when you wake up in the morning and the last thing you see before you fall asleep so decorate in bright, warm colours."

Deborah said:

"Avoid clutter at all costs and keep any surfaces as clean as possible – impact can be lost if the room is overwhelmed by too many ornaments and personal effects. Less is always more. Don't spend a fortune on art for your walls. Buy cheap box canvases and cover them in coordinating fabrics."

The Living Room

Andrew said:

"This is an important room where a great

deal of value can be added for minimum outlay. A new carpet and a lick of paint can make the world of difference. The most critically important thing to catch a buyer's eye is a feature. This should be a focal point around which you can arrange furniture (and no, not a television!). An inviting fireplace is ideal."

Deborah said:

"Standard radiators can look quite dull in a room; they usually end up warming the back of your sofa or they sit under a window spoiling the overall look of your window treatment. The problem is that designer radiators can be very expensive; however, DIY stores now carry quite a large selection of radiators with a difference. A normal radiator will project into the room by three inches and in a small room all the space counts so go for tall corner radiators. Ones like the Iguana from Jaga utilise otherwise dead space, giving you more room, whilst creating a very modern look."

The Bathroom

Andrew said:

"Home makeover TV shows have shown us our homes can be transformed with a little bit of imagination and elbow grease. Studies have shown that renovating the main bathroom in a home has an estimated payback of 60% to 65% when the home is

resold but a full makeover can be expensive and a real inconvenience. Houses aren't bought and sold on the strength of the bathroom but buyers look for a fresh, clean environment. Some minor cosmetic changes such as replacing tired towel rails or worn-out bathmats can create the right impression."

Deborah said:

"For a quick makeover in a tired bathroom consider adding a bold bright accent by dyeing old towels. Often we replace towels because they lose their colour slightly and look a little tired. Dyeing your towels couldn't be easier and it will give them a new lease of life. Choose a darker colour than the original colour and try some really bright colours like cerise or lime green. Fold them and display them on a small shelf at the end of the bath and you will give the bathroom a new lease of life all for the cost of some dye."

Deborah Drew runs her own interior design consultancy in Cardiff, More details on Deborah at www.dddesigns.co.uk

Andrew Gregory runs The Property Megastore estate agency on Whitchurch Road in Cardiff, More details at www.propertymegastore.co.uk