

The Amazing Terrace

One of the amazing features of the house, and one we immediately fell in love with, was the terrace.



Overlooking the river and sheltered by the house, shaded by huge trees, it is peace and tranquillity with a side of beauty. With the pond rehabilitated and looking beautiful and the pile of timber covered by a tarpaulin removed, it

was time to get into action. The lighting was so important to bring this big part of the house alive, and the night the lights went on was a celebration. We added strings of party lights for our first guests (not friends but real guests). July was finally where we got to take a moment at the end and see what we had achieved in just five months. We also got to enjoy many, many nights eating outside, and for the first time



since we moved in actually enjoy the French lifestyle and go to a market, come home and eat what we gathered there. By the end of July we did actually felt like we had arrived to live in France.



Kitchens

This picture won't not mean much to anyone except us.

In July we had finished painting and decorating all the rooms that were part of phase 1. We had even moved into our apartment... but we only had one out of six kitchens installed as part of phase 1. These were major delays thanks to Covid, but in the end they arrived and were going to be installed. After finally getting the ground floor cleared and dressed, I must say I did not enjoy seeing it full of boxes again. However, knowing these kitchens were the final touches did make it bearable.



When fully completed we will have 10 kitchens – Can you imagine the shopping list to fit them all out? We were very lucky in July to have a dream team of volunteers with us. One of them was an old mate Mel who I have worked with in Australia and Europe. While in the old days we shared many spreadsheets, this time she created the kitchen inventory spreadsheet instead of the salary review one. We had so much fun laughing that finally there was a spreadsheet I was interested in.

The Great Outdoors

In July we finally got to go outdoors, and we had a dream team to help.



At one point Pete stopped me to look out and see nine people all working outside. We have been blessed to have found a website called WorkAway, where people volunteer their time in exchange for a bed, food and cultural exchange. The group in July included our Kiwi mates living in Germany, a wonderful lady from Por-

tugal who was so amazing we were just in awe at her skills and pace, two lovely young ladies from the UK and a wonderful French couple – these guys know who they are, and with Lucie who has been a volunteer here from the start they made an amazing team. We all sat at a huge table at night enjoying a meal and sharing our stories.

It was truly a time when we felt like the luckiest people on earth. We had so much fun and did not want anyone to leave. There were lots of tears as each did eventually have to leave but the memory of the time we shared will stay with all of us I am sure.



Even The Laundry

It was an all-girl team who got stuck into the task of cleaning the downstairs former storerooms and turning them into a laundry, linen store for the commercial linen pick-up and two storerooms. Up the stairs where the washing machines used to sit got turned into the larder. This was a job that I really wanted doing, but without our dream team we would never have got it done. Girls, I think of you every time I go in there to put on washing, and now it is beginning to get used for crockery. The fact it is all freshly painted is just so wonderful. Thank you.



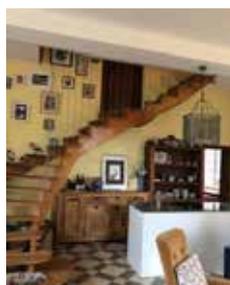
We Are Moving In

Finally, after five months of living in one bedroom we moved into our apartment.



It is nice to have all of our belongs out of the barn and see the pictures of loved ones back up on the walls. I now don't feel so much like a passer by helping out, but feel like this is my home. Of course, we are still just sleeping in one

room as we continue to cook and eat in the shared kitchen, but the dream of one day having a meal on our own and maybe even sit on the couch and watch TV! We just love it even if time spent in it is currently limited.



It Is Curtain Time!

I remember the cold day in late February when I picked the fabric for these curtains and all the other curtains for the rooms in phase one.

The fabric was so beautiful, and I have never had curtains made before, so this was a very new experience for me. By complete chance,

the colour inspired by the birds in the wallpaper ended up being the exact same colour as a sofa we inherited and so cemented the decision to let it

stay. From February to July is a long time but the wait was so worth it, I love them, all 4 metres of them.



Guests That Help!

Ok, so one is a friend, but her mate she was traveling with was not. These lovely ladies pruned the roses, cut the lavender and helped us treat the wood for the pool house. Everything is on track, including the pool for day 1, being 1st August 2020.



Apartments Ready To Go

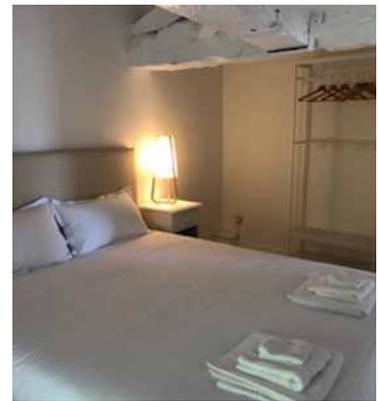
The ground floor studio and river view apartments are now ready. The ground floor studio is everyone's favourite.



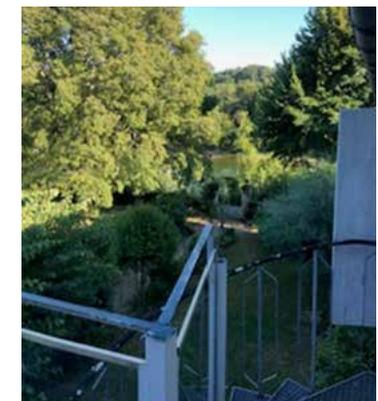
We paid so much attention to detail with the light fittings, painting detail on the cupboard that is the full width of the room, reconfiguring the bathroom and building a brand new walk in shower. It was a labour of love this room, and with the new half wall with USB charging built in, and Laura Ashley wallpaper it just all came together better than we hoped.



The river view apartment is one of the spaces I loved from the start. It was dark and dirty and neglected for a long time but I just knew it would respond well to some TLC. The kitchen is wonderful, setting off the beams beautifully and is located underneath the skylight, so it is always bathed in light.



We now have 3 of 5 apartments ready; it feels amazing to have these 3 open for Summer. Unfortunately, the Penthouse Apartment will not be ready this summer as we have had further delays with the kitchen and the bathroom fittings. But we still remain over the moon about what is open for summer, meeting our opening date of 1st August 2020.



Garden View Suite 2 - Peacock Room

This room surprised me really. I loved the wallpaper when I selected it while in Edinburgh for Hogmanay (new Years Eve).



I was excited about the wallpaper, but I did not think how the room would end up. I know that seems strange, as I had clear vision for all the rooms, but this one I could only see the wallpaper.

When we reconfigured the bathroom, I saw the light enter the space and thought "wow you are a completely different bathroom". The stunning bedroom now has a stunning bathroom to match it. My Mum came

to stay, and carried with her in her luggage two statues and a bust. Finally, after being in a box for eight months they came out to complete this room. It is beautiful and remains my favourite room.



Guests Arrive Early!

So here we were thinking we had a few more days to be ready for the first guests to arrive.

Then a phone call changed everything: a family stranded when their holiday rental booked them into the wrong year. Two families, adult children so 10 adults now arriving. We had not practiced breakfast; the pool filter was not commissioned, and they

wanted a meal prepared for the 10 of them in two days. Party lights were being hung up while they sat and enjoyed the riverfront terrace. I have to say we had the best first guests anyone could wish for. They understood we accepted them before opening day and they

were wonderful while we raced around completing the final touches. They had the first swim in the pool and tested 6 rooms for us. We were open and felt on top of the world.



*In 5
Months and
13 days...*

...we had completed phase 1 and opened for business. To say we were a little high on adrenaline would be an understatement! Of course, we did not do it alone. From the professional team to all the wonderful volunteers and friends that could travel to get here all made this possible. The drive we both had to make sure we hit this deadline was intense and we have not had a single day off over this period, but we are on top of the moon. At last we can sit and enjoy a beer and a wine on the terrace, and now in addition to our friends and volunteers, with guests as well. Life is wonderful and precious, and I believe if you picture your goal with a clear vision you will always find a way to achieve it. This has been a 7-year journey to this point for us and it definitely felt like we had arrived exactly where we had envisioned we would. We feel like we're living the dream!

destiny

noun

/desteni/

plural *destinies*



**the way your life
will develop in
the future**

