

PRESS CUTTING

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LEFT: Designed by Vale Garden Houses, this conservatory is beautifully in tune with the main building and gardens, featuring white-painted windows and doors in addition to green-painted structural woodwork. ABOVE: This conservatory by Oakleaf was designed to be a light, airy office as well as a traditional haven for plants.

USEFUL CONTACTS

- Apropos Tectonic 0845 434 8901 or apropos-conservatories.com
- Heartwood Conservatories 0845 634 4058 or heartwood-conservatories.co.uk
- Marston & Langer 020 7881 5710 or marston-and-langer.com
- Oakleaf Conservatories 01904 690 401 or oakleafconservatories.co.uk
- Vale Garden Houses 01476 564 433 or valegardenhouses.com

Q I'd love to add a light-filled conservatory to my listed, stone-built Georgian home. What style should I opt for?

A Up until a few years ago, the obvious way forward would have been to go for something really traditional. A wooden conservatory in keeping with your home would certainly be a sympathetic choice, and this type has always been popular with both planners and conservationists. For several decades, many architects have seen this as the only option when it came to achieving listed building consent.

You could also be a little adventurous with your choice. Designers and local authorities have come round to the idea that, just because a building is period, that doesn't necessarily mean an extension has to religiously stick to its features. A conservatory in steel or aluminium might actually look stunning because it's markedly different to the original property. It could be sympathetic in that it won't end up looking like an uncomfortable pastiche, which can be an issue with some non-bespoke traditional designs.

Robin Parker, Apropos Tectonic



Q I'm considering extending my listed stone-built Regency residence. Should I choose a conservatory or an orangery?

A The Georgians were the main proponents of the orangery, and this form of exotic plant-preserving structure was really the only option in the 18th century. It wasn't until much later that the Victorians developed glass that could be used for larger panes, and the conservatory was born. Your home sits somewhere in between, so either type may suit. Contact several companies for quotes, and talk things through with their designers. Don't just rely on national firms – it's a good idea to look locally, too. Your aim should be to ensure you get a high-quality extension, preferably handcrafted, that will be a great investment.

As your property is listed, you'll need to get the right consents in place. There's nothing worse than receiving a refusal late in the day, so ask a planning officer to visit your home to discuss your intentions. Alternatively, make an appointment and bring along pictures showing what you're hoping to achieve. You should then be able to arrive at a design that will be passed.

Mandy Young, Heartwood Conservatories

Q I'd like to create a multi-purpose kitchen area in my Victorian home. Would a conservatory extension be a good idea?

A If you want to create a relaxing space where recreation and work go hand in hand, a sunny, cheerful kitchen conservatory is ideal. Its light and airy atmosphere should ensure that it becomes a room your family will want to use at all times of the day. Indeed, this is one of the most popular positions for any glazed addition. Choose a tailor-made design that suits the heritage of your Victorian home, looking especially at window style, roof pitches and details such as mouldings.

Plan carefully in order to make the most of wall space, as you'll no doubt need plenty of cupboards in your kitchen. Boundary walls are extremely valuable in this situation. If permissible, consider maximising the size of the opening from the existing building into the conservatory. This will lend a greater sense of space, and make it easier to pass between areas and serve your freshly-prepared treats!

Lisa Morton, Vale Garden Houses

