

# lessons from a renovation

Even if you've been there before, the renovation process can be intimidating.



**W**hen editor Sharon Newey and partner Ian Rainey undertook a major renovation of their house recently, some of the issues that arose were easy to resolve... and some involved lots of learning. Here are some of their tricks and tips:

**1. Start with the right design.** Take the time to really think about the design of your house. Turn it upside down and back to front. Will it work for you in the long term, and will it cope with changes in technology? A decent-sized home office was always on the wish list because Ian and Sharon often work from home. It's now the most used space in the house... because of their teenage sons' computer use. Whereas the second living area hardly gets a look in and even one television is almost overkill – everyone tends to watch their own online streaming services on their tablets.

**2. Find the right builder and sub-trades.** Ian and Sharon opted for a labour-only building contract rather than a fixed price, figuring that their experience of managing projects could be put to use. It worked well, with builder Lachlan (Locky) Harrison of Harrison Builders. Make sure you keep records of everything – all paperwork, all costs, all quotes. Sharon and Ian set up various spreadsheets to keep track of quotes and costs, as well as invoices paid. Another file had all council documents, and another had product information and samples. All payments also came out of one bank account for easy tracking.

**Left:** A neutral scheme of pale grey Resene Quill Grey walls and Resene Quarter White Pointer trims and ceiling works well for most of the house. It was a scheme picked out by a Resene colour consultant. If you have a colour query, visit your Resene ColorShop or ask online at [www.resene.com/colouexpert](http://www.resene.com/colouexpert).

**Opposite top:** Ian and Sharon brought in design help (Lizzie K & Co) for the kitchen. Feature pieces are the metal rangehood and island front, finished in a paint effect using various Resene browns.

**Right:** Clever and cheap, the full-height balustrade is made from standard galvanised pipe painted in Resene Spark to match the front door and custom-made pendant lights.

Resene Quarter  
White Pointer 

Resene  
Tasman 

Resene  
Spark 



You can book a Resene colour consultation online at [www.resene.com/colourconsult](http://www.resene.com/colourconsult).

**Below:** Choosing the right paint for the right job is key. Resene Sonyx 101 (semi-gloss) was used for the Rockcote panels, while Resene Lumbersider (low sheen) was used for the weatherboards. Both were tinted to Resene Sea Fog.

Resene   
Sea Fog



And sub-trades? Take your builder's advice – the sub-trades that worked out the best were the ones Locky recommended as there was an established relationship and everyone had a vested interest in the project being a success.

**3. Ask questions** – of anyone from the council to the builder to the curtain maker. And keep on asking until you understand the answer. Set your radar on high alert for potential issues and don't ignore it when it pings.

**4. Quotes, quotes and more quotes.** It's an oldie but a goodie. Get as many quotes as you can. It's easy when the building industry is so busy and services and trades seem scarce, to just settle for whoever promises to simply turn up. But stick to the old rule of getting at least three quotes. It pays off in the end.

**5. Know when you need decorative help.** Sharon has been editor of *habitat* magazine for years, but with so much choice of Resene colours, and a family who needed to also approve of colour choices, she kept going around in circles. Taking advantage of the free colour consultancy service available at selected Resene ColorShops, she spent just a half hour with specialist Nikki Morris and walked out with the perfect scheme: Resene Quill Grey, Resene Hit Grey, Resene Dusted Blue, Resene Tasman, Resene Quarter White Pointer, Resene White Pointer and an exterior in Resene Sea Fog. It's a relaxing but not too neutral scheme, with colours from the same tonal band.

 Resene  
Quill Grey



**Above right:** The couple's teenage sons opted for blue and green for their bedrooms, which Sharon and Resene colour specialist Nikki Morris then interpreted in softer, greyed off forms; this one is Resene Dusted Blue.

**Above:** Resene Kitchen & Bathroom paint tinted to Resene White Pointer will protect the bathrooms from mould and bacteria.

**Below:** Think carefully about your layout and room use. The home office, painted in Resene Hit Grey, is now the most-used room of the house.

Resene Dusted Blue  Resene White Pointer  Resene Hit Grey 



New materials and technologies are numerous, especially for kitchens and bathrooms, so Liz Kerby of Lizzie K & Co helped the couple slice through the clutter, and choose a couple of kitchen feature materials – like the Super White granite benchtop and the paint effect metal rangehood housing – to add a bit of personality.

**6. Know when to trick it up a bit.** A copper front door, a balustrade made of galvanised pipe then painted in Resene Spark metallic paint, custom-made over-sized lights made of industrial perforated steel, and a paint effect rangehood and kitchen island front. These bespoke but not expensive elements carry dark bronze touches through the house, and are the first things visitors comment on.

On the outside, the steeply pitched gable of the original house had to stay so Ian and Sharon chose to accentuate it by framing it in aerated concrete panels from Rockcote. Normally used on fences or as wall panels, the rendered finish of the panels looks smart against the new weatherboard cladding.

**7. Use the right product for the job.** This is particularly true of paint. Take advantage of the technical excellence of Resene paints, and the advice of the staff at your local Resene ColorShop.

Using the Resene Kitchen & Bathroom range will help guard against mould and mildew... particularly if your teenage sons seem to have a problem with open windows. The Fly Deterrent additive definitely works – the flies now just sit on the stainless steel trusses in the vaulted ceilings instead! The Rockcote panels and weatherboards needed different types of paint – Resene Sonyx 101 for the panels and Resene Lumbersider for the weatherboards. H

 Read Sharon's renovation blog on [www.habitatbyresene.com/blogs-people/](http://www.habitatbyresene.com/blogs-people/).

**pictures** Bryce Carleton

