



Jolly Sailor Cottage

Jolly Sailor Cottage was my Granddad's house. I spent much of my childhood in Wells with my mum and brother; crabbing from the slipway, out in my Granddad's boat and generally mucking about at the seaside. Granddad took us on many watery adventures; gathering samphire, raking for cockles or taking the boat over the marshes on a Spring Tide. He would bring us back to the warmth of Nanna's kitchen and her table brimming with home baking.

The cottage is full of precious memories. The cottage was loved by us, friends and the many visitors that Granddad and Nanna welcomed. Passers-by would be invited in by my Granddad; he would play the organ for them and share stories of the cottage and Wells. I was desperate to keep the cottage in the family but the only way this would be possible was to make Granddad's house into a holiday cottage.

It was a big job on paper but the reality would be much bigger. Not only did the cottage need a huge amount of work carried out on it as no improvements had been made for forty years, I had to project manage it from Oxfordshire while juggling a job and two small children. I started out with one builder, who told me the day he was due to start that he couldn't do the job any more. After sleepless nights I finally found the perfect builder; the nephew of my Granddad's best friend, local to Wells and someone who knew the cottage in its former glory.

As the work began, so did the surprises. The walls were stripped to find old doorways, lathe and plaster boarded walls and enormous holes. The original wiring all needed replacing.

