



**“We create
restorative
home
retreats”**

STATEMENT



CHARLOTTE FINDLATER



Absolutely Cheshire speaks to Charlotte Findlater about Design & Build, emotions and an environmental ethos

Q What are your earliest memories of being creative?

A As a child I was endlessly re-arranging my room. I was fortunate to grow up in a couple of stunning historical homes, these underwent phases of renovation. I was hooked even as a five-year-old!

Q Pre-launching your own business, what were your experiences in the industry?

A Before setting up Charlotte Findlater Design, I did high-end turnkey property development for 12 years, focusing on historical buildings alongside large scale renovations. This experience has been invaluable and is reassuring to our clients as we always have an eye on maximising property value.

Q Was there a moment that inspired you to go it alone?

A Someone said to me Charlotte 'Jump and the Universe will catch you' and I guess that is all the encouragement I needed at that point!

Q From day one, what did you want to offer?

A I wanted to offer an alternative to just interior design or architecture. As a design studio, our fundamental aim has become the need to leave a positive design legacy when renovating and restoring both historical and modern spaces. Each material and resource we specify is researched so we can understand its impact on human and ecological health, when in production, in use and upon being discarded.

We create restorative home retreats that provide our clients with the space they need to reconnect, replenish their energy, step back and slow down. I am driven by the desire for people to know that the person who

DESIGN



We also recognise that each client is unique and place them at the heart of our work. We believe in each place being unique and reflecting who you are – and in the power of creativity, not the standardisation of places.

We are driven by the idea that design transcends the boundaries of aesthetics and that genuine reflection can nourish every scheme we work on. This vision of design aims to enrich the human experience and is at the centre of all our projects.

For us, design is much more than the application of technical knowledge. It is a means of artistic expression making it possible to transform a space into a real emotional universe. It is a process that allows us to create calm, natural, and harmonious spaces.

Symmetry, proportion and architectural features run right through our environmentally-friendly spaces. And you can expect to see stunning design-led craftsmanship because we wholly value collaboration in the creative process. It is through the sharing of ideas, concepts and visions that artists and craftsmen from different fields can develop their creativity and help us create spaces that are extraordinary.

Q What inspires you?

A Nature is my ultimate inspiration, I am very aware of my surroundings. I respond to nature and the environment around me, memories and connections to places I love, that inspire me or that I have lived in permeate my work. I love travel and culture and always take inspiration from both. I am fascinated by surfaces and textures of different landscapes and materials.

created these places cared deeply about the way they experience them. I want the spaces I design to create an emotional response, to spark thought, to encourage relaxation, and, above all, to endure in a timeless way.

Q What do you feel makes you different from other designers?

A Our environmental ethos sets us apart. Our focus has always been on nature, wellbeing, health, sustainability and ethical purchasing. Our default has always been to work with the natural over the superficial. We do not engage with on-trend or fad architecture and interiors. There is such beauty to be explored in naturally formed materials, each unique and over time develop the most wonderful patinas. They also have the benefit of being reusable or reworkable in the future. For example we use a lot of wood and stone in our projects and have extensive material libraries to draw upon.

All designers have a signature style and design principle that sit at the heart of their work. Our obsession is the interplay between people, built environments and nature. Expect natural materials, spaces that boost wellbeing, and handcrafted statement pieces.

The design world and trends change at high speed, but it's time to slow down, and to step away from damaging mass-market consumerism. Our design ethos centres on considered designs that reconnect people with nature.

We do not champion new trends. Rather, we seek to meet the needs and desires of individuals. And as defenders of slow design, we create natural, sustainable and transformational spaces with calming atmospheres.

By designing interiors that respect nature and the human experience, we create spaces that inspire and tell a story. Places that encourage people to slow down, to think, and to nourish their sense of wellbeing.





Q How do you like to work with a client?

A Our projects always involve exploring a narrative often whilst solving a problem. We are passionate about what we do, loving a good challenge, enjoying making connections between architecture, design, people and place. Collaboration is really important to us, we enjoy working with clients who share our ethos, care about sustainability and appreciate outstanding design. A lot of our work involves combining historic and contemporary architecture and interior design and it's a process we take real pleasure in – bringing the new and old together in a way that complements both. We like to take our clients on a journey and introduce them to a mixed natural material palette.

Q What is Ecoscaping?

A By Ecoscaping rather than landscaping, we focus on designing gardens that are biodiverse. Forming habitats for nature and providing significant human health benefits. Delivering continuity from indoors to out, echoing the character of space and place.

We believe that one of the fundamental ways in which a project's success can be measured is by making it stand out when the project is viewed as a whole, where inside and outside stand in perfectly balanced harmony.

Q What are you looking forward to in 2024?

A We have some super projects flowing into 2024 including a large eco new-build on the coast with limited access, work on some listed building residences, a swimming pool complex and the restoration of a Riad in Marrakesh.

Separately we are looking forward to growing our studio team. Get the people right and we know everything else flows. Building on our strong studio team where people challenge each other, commissioning and supporting skilled craftspeople, makers and our build teams. **③**

Contact Charlotte Findlater by calling 0300 373 1840, emailing hello@charlottefindlater.co.uk or visiting charlottefindlater.co.uk

“A lot of our work combines historic and contemporary architecture”



TAKE TWO

Charlotte Findlater
picks out recent unique projects

1

Our Lancashire Barn Conversion project really both showcases and highlights the extent of our work. Starting with the architecture, we took our cue from its Agrarian roots as an ancient farmstead, significantly extending and remodelling the interior layout infusing it throughout with both smart tech and a wealth of natural materials with a real focus on craftsmanship and handcrafted furniture and ceramics. We juxtaposed this building's design with modern art from artists such as Banksy.

2

Historical renovation of a Grade 11 listed mill. The mill and its original waterwheel date back to 1300. This previous conversion was poorly conceived. It simply didn't suit modern living. We brought a radical approach. Preservation and restoration fused contemporary and industrial materials.

Inside, we made only sensitive interventions. White plasterwork highlights historical and new features. Stone floors, oak flooring, beams, oak doors, and rustic cladding complement a neutral palette. The mill's industrial origins became the single most important preoccupation.

And the design process drew on these humble manufacturing origins. The build process involved significant restructuring and re-servicing of the mill. The deterioration of timbers in much of the building required replacement.

We introduced a complicated solution of concealed steelwork and structural timber framing. This opened up the living spaces and improved the flow of the layout.

Two new wings add striking architectural drama. They flood the building with natural light and make the most of its beautiful views across the millpond and beyond.