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#### 4 Guest bedroom

This room is furnished with beautiful recycled pieces – a bed that came from friends, a flea market chest of drawers and a bookshelf found in a shed. For a similar bed, try the Four Poster bed, £499, Home and Furniture.

reclamation yard, DRS Demolitions National, and it was in a big stack of what looked like rotting rubbish under a hedge,' says Mark. 'It was from an old psychiatric hospital in Bodmin. But I could see that the wood was sound and was going to look beautiful.' The slate tiles for the roof were also reclaimed, but one of the most successful materials used in the build was the straw for the walls. 'Straw bale building is like big brickwork – Duplo compared to Lego,' says Ruth. 'It's also a naturally grown and cheap, high-performance insulation that captures carbon in its production rather than generates it. It's quick, too. In January 2011 the building still looked like a barn with a frame, a roof and no sides, but Mark, his father, plus two builders and two carpenters, all local, set to work, and in a matter of weeks it looked like a house.'

In keeping with the couple's eco-awareness, it was important to everyone involved that only local companies with approved environmental policies were used for both interior and exterior products and that nothing was imported from abroad. Hence, the

double-glazed wooden windows were all produced locally by David Salisbury Joinery. 'We looked at triple-glazed windows,' says Mark, 'but they're basically all made in Scandinavia and we wanted to stay true to Cornwall. Because everything else is so efficient, and we were able to install everything from scratch rather than have to adapt an existing building, we realised we didn't actually need them, which was great.'

With spring came the final push and the decorating. 'We were determined to show that environmentally friendly and stylish could go well together,' says Mark. 'You don't need to be all hair shirt about it, there's nothing wrong with a bit of luxury and some colour, so we focused on good quality products in the kitchen and bathrooms, and most of the furniture is bespoke by local carpenters using local wood, which is actually very cost effective and you get exactly what you want.' The paint the couple chose from the Cornish Lime Company is also ecofriendly. 'It smelled nice,' says Mark, 'and it's the first time I've painted somewhere and not felt ill.' →

