# Bringing Sash Windows Back to Life



↑↑ Front elevation with works completed

T his project represented a fascinating challenge as The Old House dates back to Elizabethan times –as evidenced by the design of the front elevation ground-floor windows – but with later additions and amendments, resulting in a range of window styles. Unfortunately, many years of internal redecoration had left some sashes effectively sealed and poor maintenance had led to varying degrees of decay in the external timbers.

Our client's brief was to 'bring our lovely windows back to life '. The condition of the property meant that it had been empty for several years, giving the benefit of 5% VAT being chargeable on the project.

Originally, the triple units were thought to have been casements within wooden mullions, converted in the early 19th century to sliding sashes. However, the dining room set had been 'adjusted' somewhat later with inappropriate hinges and catches. The clients wanted these replaced with a sash mechanism completed using Snug units to guide us in the correct format.

After a detailed survey and an agreed scope of works, we began with the careful removal of the beads and sashes. The lancet head (or gothic style) windows had distinctive staff beads, many of which were damaged. Faithful copies incorporating a discrete brush pile for draught-proofing ensured that the internal detailing was maintained.

The right-hand section of the property, built in 1896, has five-centred arch head units. The ground floor pair only had the upper sashes hung with all first-floor units sashes all working.

The lancet-head windows on the front elevation required some significant rebuilding to the frame and were found to contain a most ingenious sash mechanism system. The central mullions were kept slim and elegant by locating both the weights on this triple unit's extreme left and right. One cord for each side pair ran across the head of the box via a pulley set into the frame's head adjacent to the centre mullion and within a concealing timber section. The central sash had no weights and was fixed shut.

Many cracked panes needed mouth-blown cylinder glass replacements to ensure that the aesthetic look and feel were maintained. A particular challenge was cutting the lancet panes, of which there were three.

As is often the case, the condition of the older windows was such that they could be repaired with only minor work. However, the newer (1896) units proved less durable and one lower sash needed to be replaced with a faithful copy from our joinery partner.

The new owners were extending to the rear of the property. A complete sash box and sashes were removed for a full renovation before the unit was relocated.

The property's rear elevation had some delightful Georgian sashes together with later, two-over-two sashes all at first-floor level. One pair had side-hung internal shutters, which had been modified over time, but which were refurbished and put back into good working order.



≫▷ *Left:* Triple, lancet head unit stripped prior to repairs

≫▷ *Right:* Solution for operating the internal sash shutters

◁≪ A restored triple lancet head unit seen from inside



When it came to one of the Georgian eight-over-eight units, there was evidence of vertical, internal shutters that had been sealed up. Once the hinged cover piece had been freed, the two shutters were able to be refurbished. The pulleys had been blocked with paint and some form of filler and needed to be replaced before commissioning. The original pull rings had been removed and so a pair of Heritage Brass recessed pulls was used.

As many of the fasteners had been either removed and replaced with modern ones and to enhance security, the clients chose new locking fasteners with key-operated Secure Sash Stops, compliant with insurance requirements.

The end result was a project that has delighted the owners, neighbours, passers-by and the team at Hampshire Sash Window Services. ✿

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