



Symmetrical placement of furniture emphasises the gracious design of a typical townhouse. Portman sofa, £3,260, plus 15 metres of fabric, David Seyfried



Original sash windows are also to be treasured; if they are sticky, loose or draughty, it is possible to have them renovated. Where features are missing, or have been replaced with substandard alternatives, it is well worth researching and carefully reinstating them (the Georgian Group has good advice on this). Gunter recommends adding wall panelling as appropriate to the period of the house, and perhaps replacing an unremarkable cast-iron fireplace with a better-looking marble one. “The main thing is that it adds to the identity and personality of the room,” she says. Todhunter, meanwhile, suggests that the detailing of mouldings, if being reinstated, may be subtly changed for a slightly more contemporary style, provided the original proportions are kept.

#### MATERIALS, FINISHES & USE OF COLOUR

It is possible to choose a palette of materials that has barely changed in 200 years – oak, marble, brass, bronze and porcelain, for example – and yet still appears relevant, luxurious and highly modern. “Period properties used a lot of English oak in their construction, so I always feel that is a very appropriate material,” says Beaugeard. He prefers a honed finish for stone and marble as more truthful to the historic nature of the property, but Gunter ►

**ABOVE** The focus of this elegant drawing room by Todhunter Earle Interiors is the view through the window to the balcony and gardens. **LEFT** In this restful Fulham bedroom by K&H Design, a triptych by Flora Roberts above the bed and a metalwork oak-leaf chandelier by Cox London link the scheme.