

Course title: Interior Design & Refurbishment Workshop

Trainer: Julian Maurice of Icon Living;

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🌐 iconliving.co.uk/training-workshops

Length of course: 1 day

Course format: live Zoom training within a small group

Strategies included: the design and refurbishment teachings are predominantly aimed at houses in multiple occupation (HMO), but could equally be applied and adapted to all strategies including buy to let, rent to rent, serviced accommodation and supported living

Course modules:

1. Principles of good design
2. Market Research
3. Building Refurbishment
4. Interior Design
5. Furnishing & Staging

Course materials provided: downloads of all the presentation slides and various documents including example site notes, risk assessment, and site extras

Follow-on courses: this workshop is a standalone course with no upsell

Forthcoming dates: 20th & 23rd September 2020

Cost: £397 with £50 discount to our readers using code bluebricks

Course review

I've seen Julian speaking at past networking events and I'd had the idea of attending one of his workshops on my wishlist for some time because I really love his design style and certainly knew it would be inspiring. I also felt sure that with Julian's training I would feel motivated with new ideas for designing rooms and choosing colours in my own projects, but in the meantime I thought I was happy just muddling along using stuff like other people's Facebook photos for ideas. And I imagine I could have continued that way, but – having now attended the workshop, I really see the value in it and I feel that I'm in a far better position when designing the rooms in my current HMO (house in multiple occupation) to optimise the rent and attract a better tenant. Hopefully, it will also help towards getting a higher valuation too.

The content was much more in depth than I expected; Julian covered aspects of project management that I hadn't anticipated and gave some really great insights, practical tips and valuable tools. His style of teaching was lovely and relaxed which quickly put me at ease. I do think you learn best when you feel comfortable.

As the workshop was on a live Zoom, with a small group, it was very easy to interact, ask questions and discuss the topics covered. There was a good balance between Julian delivering the course content and interacting with the group – he regularly checked in with us to make sure that we were understanding it.

The live Zoom training experience has its pros and cons. It was definitely nice not to have to drive to a location with the usual anxiety of finding the venue and dealing with traffic. And at the end of the day, you could just switch off the laptop and you were already at home for tea. The downside was not having the opportunity for face-to-face interaction with the other course participants during the breaks, but that's just a downside to the current climate in general.

How I plan to use the information

Within my own property business I am currently renovating my first HMO so Julian's workshop couldn't have come at a better time in our planning process. The property was in a very bad state so we have taken it back to brick. Although there is a lot more work involved with this level of refurb, the plus side is that we can completely redesign the location of sockets, pendant lights, furniture and even the partitioning walls between three of the bedrooms. We had already put together a rough plan before attending Julian's workshop, but we were quick to make changes based on what we learnt and we feel these adjustments will definitely give a better design and experience for our future tenants.

Testimonial from a previous attendee

Richie Miller, 9th August 2019

"My first 6-bed HMO is finally complete. I bought this one for £325k and is now valued at £550k. I have broken the local rental ceiling by £50pcm per room. I have also been put forward as a finalist for the council's "Most improved property 2019" award next month. Massive thank you to Julian Maurice, your course has been great".

