

Modern masterpieces

New country houses that successfully depart from a recognised vernacular are a tough challenge for even the most accomplished architect. Geoff Heath-Taylor assembles some award-winning examples built over the past five years



Flint House

↑ Winner of the RIBA House of the Year award 2015, the Flint House, commissioned by Lord Rothschild for his estate at Waddesdon, Buckinghamshire, uses local building materials to match its setting in the landscape. Conceived as two wedges that rise from the flat fields like a geological extrusion, the house is clad in the flint and chalk that are found in great quantities in the surrounding countryside. *Skene Catling de la Peña architects (020-7262 2806; www.scdlp.net)*



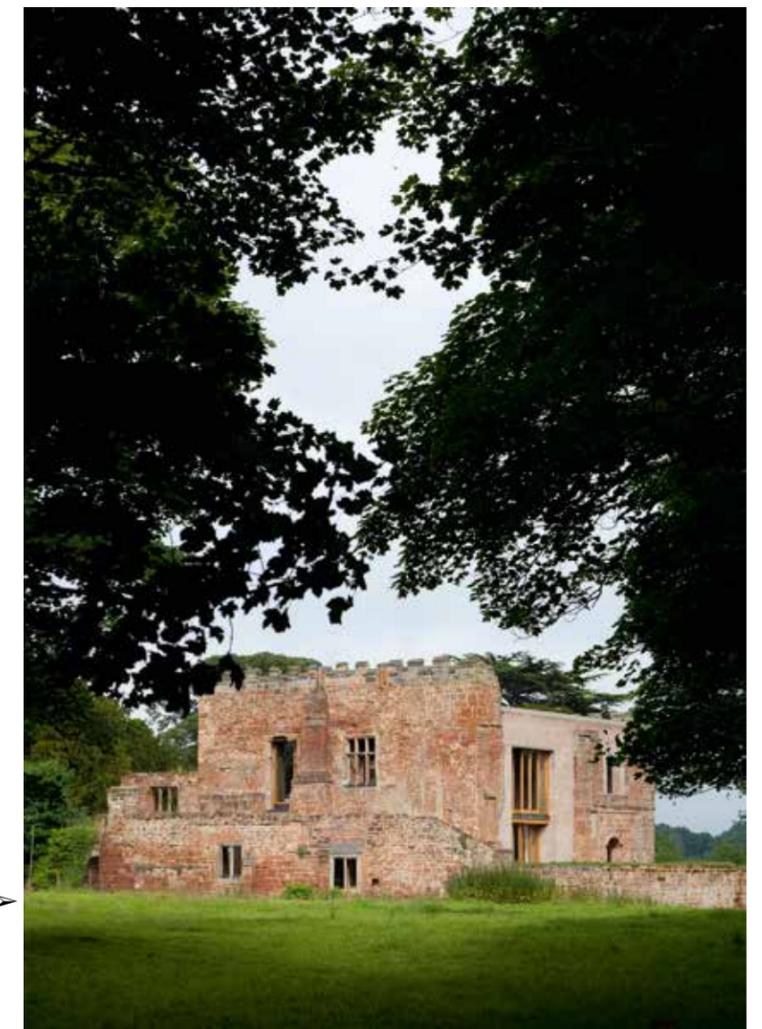
James Morris; Will Scott; The Landmark Trust

The Ancient Party Barn

↑ Formally a derelict 18th-century threshing barn, architects David Liddicoat and Sophie Goldhill won the RIBA South East Award in 2015 for their reworking of this historic building in Kent. Although not strictly a new-build, the salvaged oak from the original barn is now simply cosmetic, hiding a steel exoskeleton and insulation panels. The open interior has a beautiful waxed-steel staircase that wraps itself, helter-skelter like, around the tapered brick chimney. A mechanised American aircraft-hangar door allows the front of the building to open fully. *Liddicoat & Goldhill (www.liddicoatgoldhill.com; 020-7923 2737)*

Astley Castle

→ This 2013 Stirling Prize-winning house was commissioned by The Landmark Trust as an addition to its portfolio of historic country houses available for hire. The architects' brief was to design a contemporary new house to incorporate the medieval remains of Astley Castle, which had been burnt out and ruined in 1978. The Minimalist design, with its crisp pointing and vast plate-glass windows contrasts with the rugged stone walls surrounding it, even as the high ceilings and open spaces echo the great halls and galleries of the old castle. *Wetherford Watson Mann Architects (020-7613 3113; www.wwmarchitects.co.uk)*





Sussex House

↑ Winner of the RIBA National Award 2015, this house overlooks the South Downs in West Sussex. A compilation of cross-laminated timber and glass means this house is unashamedly modern in feel and design. The surrounding gardens have been carefully landscaped to link the house to its surroundings and the roof of undulating pyramids echoes the rolling hills of the Downs.

Wilkinson King Architects (020-7284 1975; www.wilkinsonking.com)

Cranham Lodge

↓ Voted best timber-framed house by the *Daily Telegraph* in 2013 and winner of the RIBA South West Regional Award in the same year, this eco home in Gloucestershire combines enduring natural materials with a contemporary design. The green-oak frame, built by Carpenter Oak & Woodland, supports a pitched roof of sedum and the gently curving lakeside façade of locally sourced Cotswold stone gives the house a timeless quality that allows it to relate directly to its setting.

Batterham Matthews (01225 851122; www.batterhammatthewsarchitects.co.uk)



Paul Riddle; Simon Maxwell