



Unusual: The Dutch-style gable makes this spacious Earlham Road house stand out. The six-bed home is on the market for £399,500.

Turn your garage into a junk-free living space

Garages are often promoted as major selling points for houses but many people park the car outside and store their unwanted bits and pieces inside.

Now that valuable but often underused floor area is being marketed as the next big thing in the multi-billion pound home improvement market.

The Bedfordshire-based Garage Conversion Company was founded four years ago when construction expert Phil

Bateman was asked by friends how they could turn their garage into extra living space. Others saw the results, wanted the same and the GCC was born. It now has 26 regional franchises and plans to increase that figure to 80.

Mr Bateman said: "Most garages are full of junk and lots of modern cars are just too big to fit comfortably into older garages. When you are looking for room to expand, the answer could be just

outside your home."

Conversion of a single garage to living space in a fortnight typically costs £10-£15,000, much less than the cost of many loft conversions. Planning permission is often not needed, and the average garage measures about 150 sq ft - ideal for a good-size dining room, living room, office or bedroom.

→ The garageconversion.com website has more information.

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