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- COLOUR AND PATTERN IN A GEORGIAN APARTMENT

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May 2015

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Bright artwork and bunches of spring flowers instantly fill this neutral sitting room with life (see page 54).

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WELCOME

Designed for living is our main coverline this month. In all honesty, every house is designed for living, but some more so than others. I've said before that if I had the resources, I'd love to build my own home. That said, I only ever think about the design of the living space – the size and layout of the rest of the house changes, depending on my mood and which country I'm dreaming of living in at the time... What is consistent is that the home of my dreams is full of light and enjoys a view, but it isn't completely exposed. I usually include a row of trees that add some shelter, or I design the shape of the house in a U, where the rooms look into a courtyard, so I can have some privacy. For the majority of us, this ambition will never come true, but we can always expand and adapt our space to suit our needs. If you're currently planning to transform your home, there are plenty of ideas for you in this month's issue – and for those of you who share the dream of building your own, turn to page 59 for an inspiring eco-build.

Deborah

DEBORAH BARKER, EDITOR IN CHIEF

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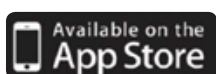
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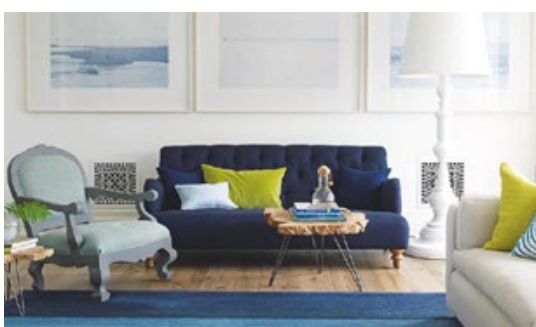
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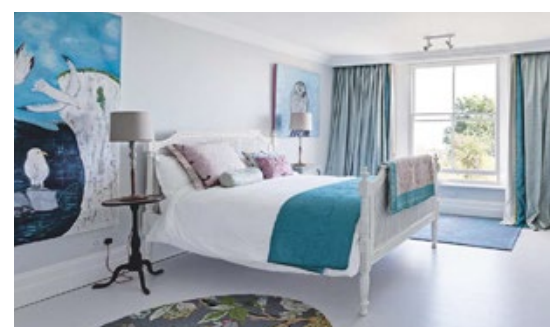
OUTSIDE IN

A traditional-style New York beach house brings a chic coastal feel indoors



IN WITH THE NEW

How a tired Edwardian detached house was turned into a vibrant family home



BESIDE THE SEASIDE

This Victorian villa was given personality with unique artefacts and colourful artwork

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MAY

TRENDS | WHAT'S NEW | MUST-HAVE BUYS



1



2

3



5



4



6



7

8



9



BEE INSPIRED

This month we pay homage to the humble bumblebee. With designs that have got us buzzing, you can turn your home into a hive of activity

1 BEESWAX BEAUTY
Brass candle lantern with
amber decal, £8, Wilko
2 BEE'S KNEES
Timorous Beasties
Three Bee cushion,
£60, Occa-Home

3 THE HONEY POT
Apiary glass jar, £15, Oka
4 SWARM AND COSY
Zigzag ochre knit throw,
£25, Next
5 POLLEN ART
Bumblebee print, £10 for

A4 unframed, Bright Pixels
6 NECTAR POINTS
Ferm Living hexagon napkin
rings, £42 for four, Smug
7 HONEYCOMB HEXAGONS
Glass-topped side table, £169,
Atkin & Thyme

8 CREATING A BUZZ
Busy Bee jugs, £17 and
£14, Sophie Allport
9 SEWING BEE
Bumblebee design
embroidered cushion,
£12, Marks & Spencer



INTO THE BLUE

Fashionable and sophisticated, cool and moody, blue is the colour of the moment – from bold cobalt to inky, midnight blues and relaxed denim tones

1 BLUE LAGOON

Dive abstract cushion by Amy Sia, £70

2 TURQUOISE TREAT

Babylon ceramic table lamp with ivory silk shade, £295, LuxDeco

3 NAVY NOOK

Keats armchairs, in left- and right-hand options, £1,970 each, The Sofa and Chair Company

4 FLORAL FANCY

Blue faux hydrangea heart wreath, £35, Bloom

5 NIGHT ON THE TILES

Double duvet set, £12, George Home

6 BLUE NOTES

Notebook, £12.50, Paperchase

7 HOUSE OF CARDS

Cartina table, £170, Out There Interiors

8 BLANKET BLUE

Scion Shibori cotton throw, £120, Bedeck

9 KITCHEN COOL

Premier Housewares Disc bar stool in blue powder coated metal, Galaxystores.co.uk

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Q&A

Our resident interiors expert Rachel Leedham is on hand to answer all your decorating queries

DOG MOTIF FABRIC

Can you recommend an attractive linen material for my dog-obsessed eight-year-old son? I'd like to make a blind and some cushions for his bedroom.

SHEILA KERSHAW, SOUTH WALES

I've found some lovely designs that should prove as pleasing to you as they will to your son. Fenella Smith (01491 638850, fenellasmith.com) sells fabrics featuring pugs, Labradors or dachshunds (pictured, left). The fabrics come in a choice of cotton, £38.50m, or linen, £48m; also available are

coordinating linen union cushions (right) with a large print on the front and repeat print on the reverse, £40 each, including the feather pad. You could also consider the range offered by Emily Bond (01173 763067, emilybond.co.uk), which comprises seven dog fabrics in linen union, £48m.



CABINET HANDLES

We've moved house and have inherited a perfectly good Shaker-style kitchen, which I want to repaint. The only problem is the cheap-looking wooden door handles. Do you have any suggestions?

KERRY BRADFIELD, LINCOLNSHIRE

Good door handles are akin to the fashion accessories to an outfit – they can make or break a scheme. For your kitchen, you might like to try metal drawer pulls. Armac Martin (0121 359 2111; armacmartin.co.uk) has a range of stylish offerings. Pictured above is the Cotswold kitchen bin-pull drawer handle in polished nickel, H4 x W9cm, £24.64. Willow & Stone (01326 311388, willowandstone.co.uk) is another good source for smart door furniture: its rectangular hooded drawer pull, H4.5 x W10cm, starts at £17.25 for a solid-brass version.

WOOD LAMP BASE

I spotted a beautiful carved lamp base with what looks like a limed finish. Can you tell me where I might find a similar rustic lamp, as a pair of these would fit perfectly in my sitting room?

MARIA DYERS, NORFOLK

An eye-catching lamp looks striking when displayed as a pair. For a similar rough-hewn design, try the St Malo lamp from Grand Illusions (01747 858300, grandillusions.co.uk). Made of whitewashed birch, it comes with a linen shade and measures H47 (including the shade) x W23cm, £125. For more ideas, look at the Mandovi lamp base in mango wood, H52 x Dia22cm, £150 (shade not included), at Armstrong Ward (01539 720400, armstrongward.co.uk), and the Marielle lamp base in washed mango wood (shown), H52 x Dia15.5cm, £85; it's pictured with the Voyage Moreland Stags shade, Dia40cm, £85, both John Lewis (03456 049049, johnlewis.com).



COMPACT EASY CHAIR

I'm moving to an apartment and am looking for contemporary easy chairs that don't take up too much space – the buttoned ones in Fenella Nicholas' family room (p112, January 2015) would be perfect. Do you know where I can buy them?
WILLIAM MCBRIAR, COUNTY ANTRIM

Fenella designed her chairs and had them custom-made, but I can suggest some similar off-the-peg designs. The Original Chair Company (01738 564777, theoriginalchaircompany.co.uk) offers the sleek Ogilvy side chair, H90 x W72 x D88cm, £1,100, plus 4.5m fabric. The Triton chair (shown) by

Andrew Martin (020 7225 5100, andrewmartin.co.uk) measures H90 x W80 x D86cm and costs £1,095, plus 4m of fabric. Oka (0844 815 7380, okadirect.com) has a non-buttoned version – the Manon armless chair comes covered in a ticking stripe and measures H81 x W63 x D85cm, £475.



GALVANISED METAL PLANTERS

We recently visited a Cotswolds village where I spied some lovely planters in a front garden that resembled traditional washing dolly tubs. Have you come across anything like this?
COLLEEN O'CONNOK, BIRMINGHAM

The planters you saw could have been original dolly tubs, and you can pick up vintage ones quite easily on eBay. Garden Trading (0845 608 4448, gardentrading.co.uk) sells a range of planters called Vence (below) that take their inspiration from these historic designs. Made of zinc-plated steel, they include a set of two measuring H40.5 x W48cm, £95 for the pair.



BEVELLED MIRRORS

I'd love to find out where Heidi Maude bought the different shaped mirrors that hang in her staircase (p138, December 2014). I'm hoping to create a similar effect in my cloakroom.
JACQUI WILBER, NORTH LONDON



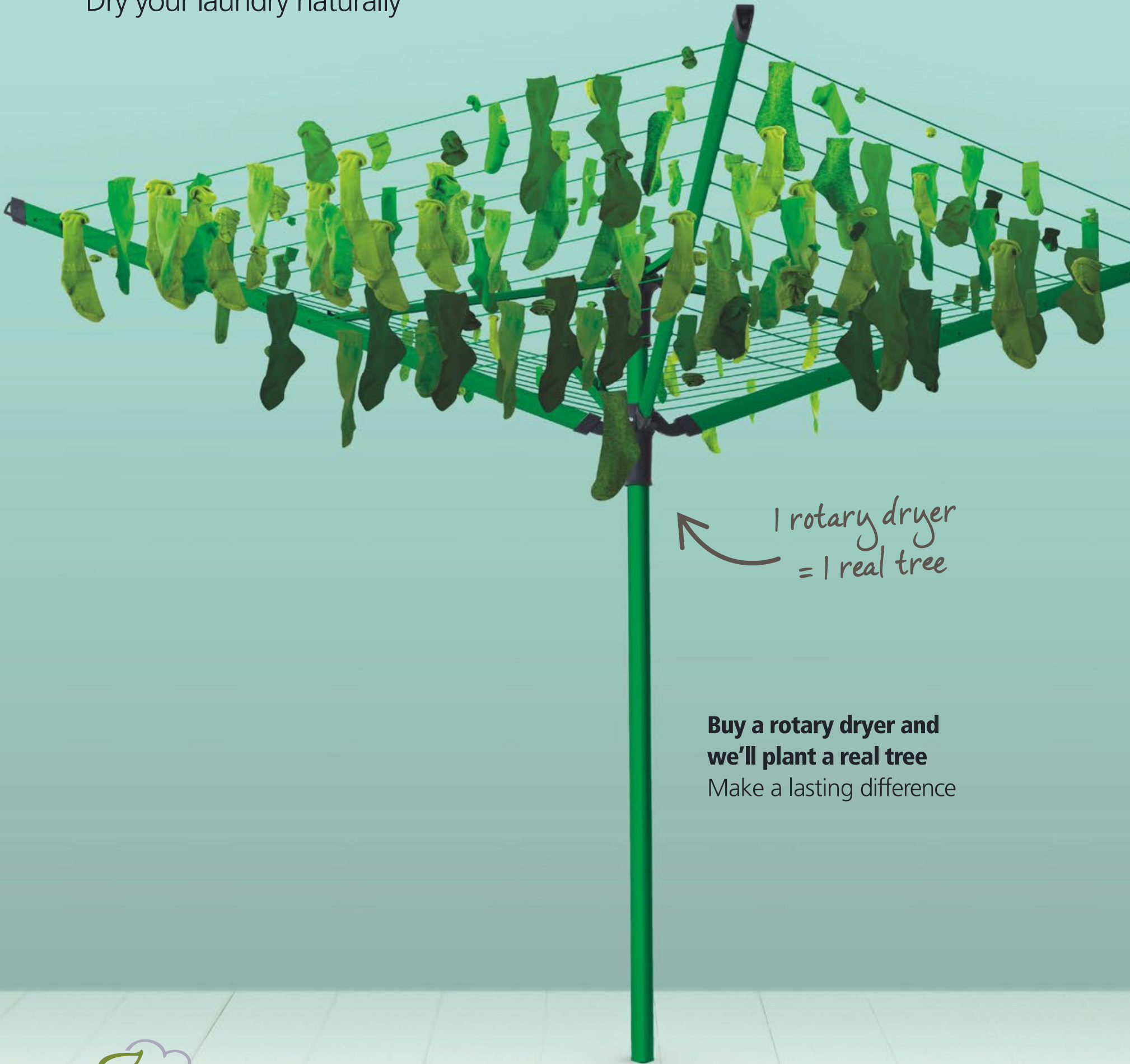
These bevelled-edge mirrors look particularly effective when hung en masse. Most date to the 1930s and 1940s, and Heidi collected them from flea markets, eBay and antiques fairs such as Sunbury Antiques Market (01932 230946, sunburyantiques.com). Also try Loop the Loop (01873 812524, looptheloop.co.uk), which generally stocks these, from £55. For reproduction versions, Cox & Cox (0844 858 0744, coxandcox.co.uk) sells this set of three bevelled mirrors in different shapes, £175.

GET IN TOUCH

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Deborah

DEBORAH BARKER, EDITOR IN CHIEF

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DISTINCTIVE



HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY Detached clapboard villa, built in 1790

LOCATION Sag Harbor, New York

ROOMS Sitting room, dining room, kitchen, cloakroom, study, five bedrooms, three bathrooms, barn

PURCHASED 2001

PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'The last place we bought was in New York City,' says Steven.

Steven Gambrel and his partner Chris Conner transformed a ramshackle coastal house into an idyllic weekend retreat

MARINE DREAM

FEATURE KATHY HURST | **PHOTOGRAPHY** ARIADNA BUFI

DESIGN TIP 'Using an understated palette brings cohesion to a home, but it's fun to play around with splashes of colour too'



Designer Steven Gambrel and his partner Chris Conner have their pet Labradoodle, Dash, to thank for discovering their home – an elegant clapboard villa overlooking Sag Harbor Cove. 'We fell in love with the area while holidaying with friends,' says Steven, 'and, one day, while walking Dash, she managed to root out this wonderful timeworn cottage, half-hidden by foliage.' Although the cottage wasn't in the best condition, the couple sensed its potential.

'The building had fallen victim to a series of misguided DIY projects but we knew we could rework the structure to emulate a typical Sag Harbor house, loosely based on colonial design,' says Steven. The façade was reconfigured into a symmetrical elevation with set-back wings. A 1960s

DINING ROOM

Bold pieces of furniture create a focal point in a minimal scheme.

The Maharani dining furniture range, from £125, available at John Lewis, would suit this look



SITTING ROOM

‘My father and I applied shellac to the space in three days, and then fitted salvaged beams to create a sense of age,’ says Steven.

For a similar sofa try the Bluebell range, from £1,240, Sofa.com. The Maharani coffee table, £225, John Lewis, would work here



KITCHEN

The flagstone flooring was reclaimed from a New York museum and, along with the marble basin, creates a striking focal point. Wells Reclamation can source stone butler’s sinks, from £235. Metro white wall tiles, £19.50sq m, Topps Tiles, are comparable. Vintage Fritled Coolie pendants, £60 each, Fritz Fryer, would work here

garage was transformed into a spacious sitting room with a vaulted ceiling, timber floorboards and 18th-century beams sourced from a derelict property. ‘We also modified the size and shape of window openings so that the whole building now feels at ease with its age and position,’ he adds. ‘Our focus was to rework the interior into comfortable living spaces, while restoring its period core.’ The ambitious three-year project also saw the construction of a stone guesthouse, as well as a pavilion – the perfect place for summer lunches.

The waterside setting also provided inspiration for the interior scheme. Elegant panelling is gently washed in chalky white and duck-egg tones and nautical touches abound – rope-and-glass fishing floats, fishermen’s lanterns, a table fashioned from gnarled driftwood, and a sea captain’s chair. A blend

HALL

The colour scheme perfectly complements the couple’s antique furniture.

Similar Antler table lamp, price on application, Holt Harrison. Parma Gray modern emulsion, £38 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball, is a match for the wall colour





PAVILION

This was designed with entertaining in mind. 'It's the perfect spot for summer lunch with friends,' says Steven.

Teak Cove sofa, £1,795, Indian Ocean, has a similar style. Ombre glass and nickel table lamp, £90, Pacific Lifestyle, would work here

SEE THE REST OF STEVEN AND CHRIS'S HOME



HALL
Brass pendant lamps add grandeur here.



SNUG
Steven's confidence with colour is evident in this striking space.



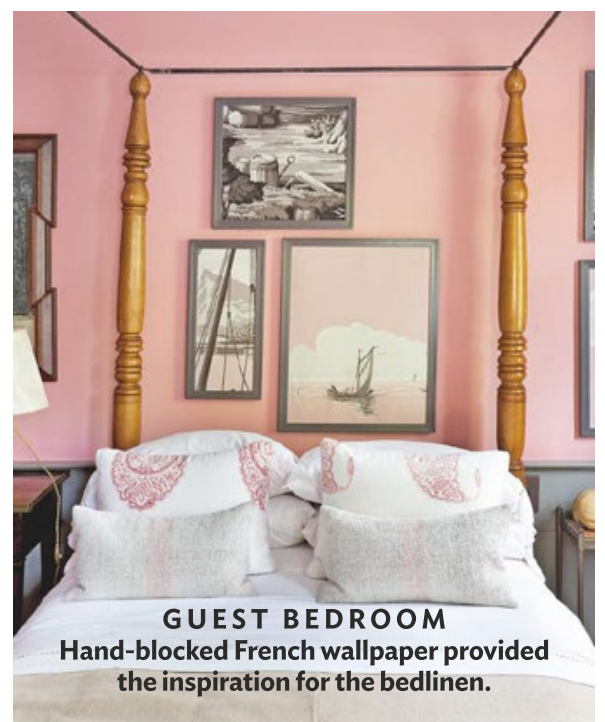
SITTING ROOM
Don't neglect corners – standout pieces and cosy seating create a relaxed nook.



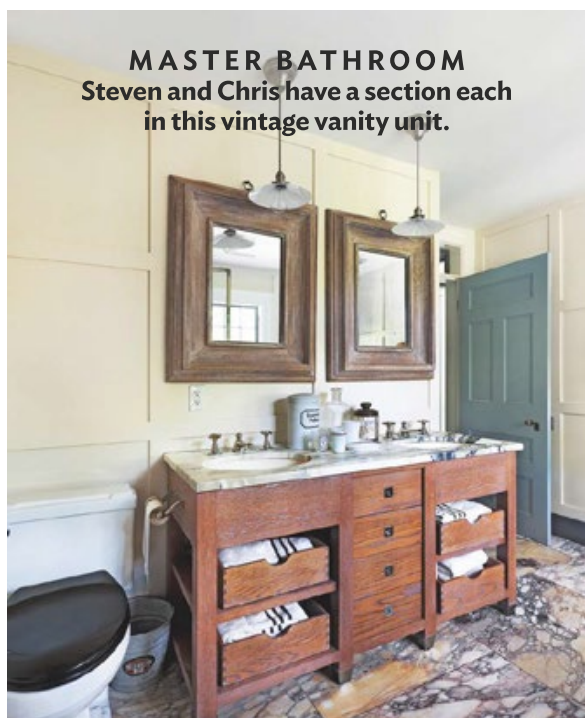
STUDY
An alcove space has been put to good use with a made-to-measure bed.



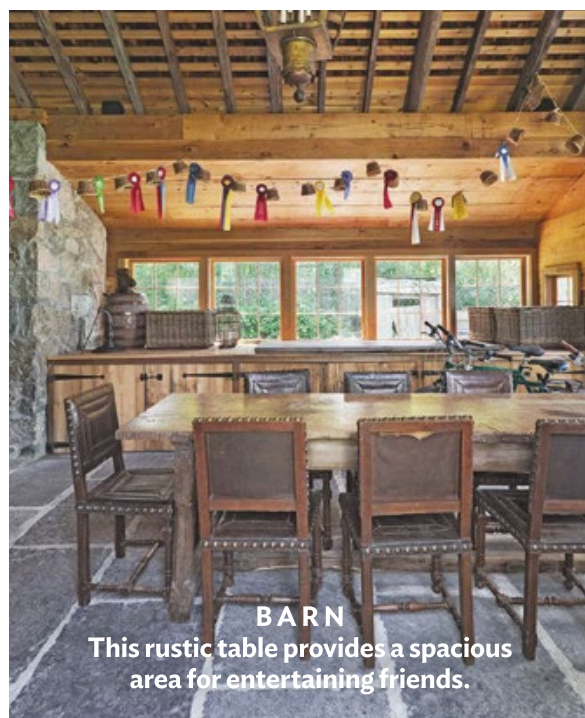
GUEST BEDROOM
A highlighted skirting board, window frame and picture rail lend character.



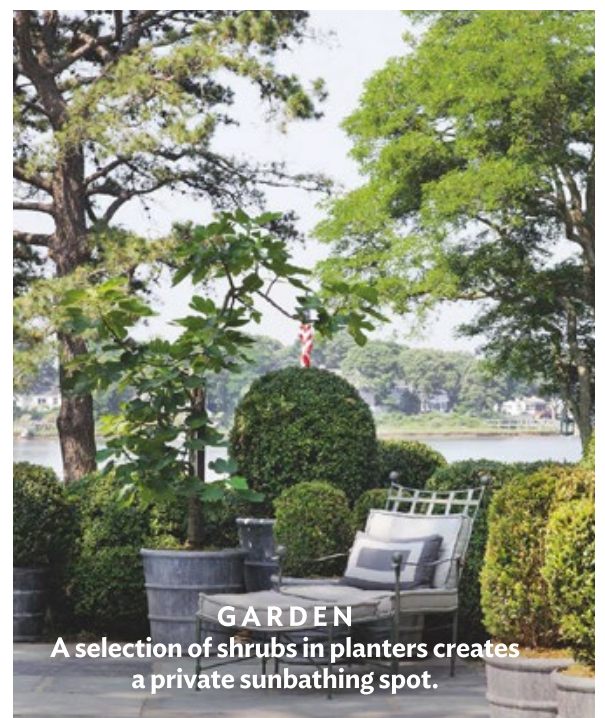
GUEST BEDROOM
Hand-blocked French wallpaper provided the inspiration for the bedlinen.



MASTER BATHROOM
Steven and Chris have a section each in this vintage vanity unit.



BARN
This rustic table provides a spacious area for entertaining friends.



GARDEN
A selection of shrubs in planters creates a private sunbathing spot.

**MASTER
BEDROOM**
Introduce dark accents
to a light scheme to
add definition.

Dix Blue modern
emulsion, £42 for 2.5
litres, Farrow & Ball, is a
good match. For similar
bedding try Denim
Stripe duvet cover
in smoky blue, £80
for a double, Secret
Linen Store



of natural textures – wicker, pewter and glass – lends a relaxed, laid-back feel, while salvaged materials add to the sense of faded grandeur.

As a designer, Steven is well known for his brave use of colour – hence the bracing dose of floor-to-ceiling purple in the snug. Bold-painted period panelling provides a dramatic backdrop for modern pieces, including an equally vibrant button-backed linen sofa and abstract artwork of billowing sails. Upstairs in a salmon pink guest room meanwhile, treasured items that Steven and Chris sourced from a flea market in Paris adorn the walls.

More than a decade on, the house continues to be a creative focus for the pair. ‘Several summers and seasons have come and gone and the place continues to evolve,’ says Steven. ‘I never fail to feel reinvigorated here – it’s the perfect antidote to our hectic city lives.’ 25

MASTER BATHROOM

Reclaimed marble and a cast-iron tub make for a dramatic space.

La Rochelle Cast Iron Bateau bath, £1,995, The Cast Iron Bath Company, is a match



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LET THERE BE LIGHT

Michelle and Garrett Clinton have added a bright extension to their traditional terrace

FEATURE ALIX BATEMAN | PHOTOGRAPHY RACHAEL SMITH

Michelle and Garrett Clinton lived and worked in New York for four years before returning to London in 2008 just prior to the birth of their first child, Danny, now 6. After two years of renting, they found a Queen Anne-style terrace ripe for renovation in their favourite part of town.

The couple were attracted to the house's traditional red brick façade, plus the fact that there was scope for extending at the back while maintaining a good-sized garden. 'The house had been rented out for years and needed refreshing,' says Michelle, so they undertook four months of work. Initially renovating the main body of the house, Michelle and Garrett installed a new boiler, radiators, carpet and three bathrooms as well as painting throughout. 'I was keen to retain period features such as the fire surrounds and original floorboards, which we stripped, refinished and varnished,' Michelle explains.

But, with a second baby on the way, they waited to tackle the rear extension, and instead waded through colours, fittings and textile options, finishing the initial works just in time for the birth of their second son, Finlay, now 4. 'Luckily, he was two weeks late, otherwise we'd have been in the middle of moving in,' laughs Michelle.

Having stayed in rented accommodation while the initial phase was completed, the couple weren't keen on the upheaval of work at the rear. 'But there was a utility and bathroom blocking the view to the garden,' says





INSPIRING



HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY Queen Anne revival terrace, built in 1880

LOCATION South London

ROOMS Hall, sitting room, playroom, cloakroom, kitchen-diner, utility, four bedrooms (one en suite), three bathrooms

PURCHASED 2010

PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'Before, we rented a terraced house in London,' says Michelle.

KITCHEN-DINER

'I wanted a great space for entertaining,' says Michelle.

Hans J Wegner-style wishbone chair in black, £130, Cult Furniture. Harlem industrial console table on wheels, £425, Alexander and Pearl. Brooklyn tin tiles wallpaper, £219, Rockett St George. Tripod floor lamp, £165, Lombok



DESIGN TIP *'Collect and display items from all areas of your life so that your*

KITCHEN

'I designed the extension so I could see the kids in the playroom or garden while cooking,' says Michelle.

Bespoke kitchen, from £35,000, Roundhouse Design. Fresh flowers from £25, Bright Day Flowers. Industrial wooden stools, £150 each, Cox and Cox. Tom Dixon Beat White pendant lights, £275 each, Heal's



CLOAKROOM

The wallpaper makes a fantastic feature wall.

Young and Battaglia Bookshelf Wallpaper, £70 per roll, Rockett St George





home tells a story – my son's artwork is as precious as any expensive gift'





MASTER BEDROOM
Contrasting blue tones lend a Nordic feel. Wilbur hand-woven ceiling light shade, £65, Habitat. Valentin super king size bed in charcoal brushed linen cotton, £995; Valentin blanket box, £430; both Sofa.com



EN-SUITE BATHROOM
Subway tiles add a New York aesthetic. Metro white tiles, £19.50sq m, Topps Tiles. Walls painted in Delta, £36 for 2.5 litres, Paint Library



GUEST BEDROOM
'I loved the petrol blue of the bedside lamp so carried it through to the lampshade and bookcase,' says Michelle. Bookcase painted in Stiffkey Blue estate eggshell, £53 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball. Grayson Teal blue metal desk lamp, £45, Habitat

Michelle. 'And as a florist and keen gardener, I longed to open up the back and create an unobstructed outlook.' As the house is in a conservation area, plans had to be modified several times. 'Originally we wanted a flat back extension, but we had to maintain the original L-shaped rear,' explains Michelle. 'Now I'm glad, as it really works.'

They appointed an architect and were clear about their intentions. 'I wanted it to be clean, modern and simple, with year-round views of the garden,' says Michelle, whose passion for distinctive fresh flowers is evidenced on almost every surface. So they chose bifold doors in order to open up the entire rear on warm days, converted the original dining room into a playroom and, a year after the extension was built, they added display shelves in the seating area. The result is a fantastic

kitchen-diner with a wealth of glass letting in the light and an abundance of plants inside and out. 'With all the doors open, the barbecue area feels like part of the house, and the room is a brilliant party space,' says Michelle.

Furniture has been brought from America, such as the dining table and bench made from antique barn wood. Framed prints and industrial touches, such as the metallic light fittings and embossed tin tile wallpaper, are a nod to their life in The Big Apple. 'We hope we've created a cool look that suits the family to a tee,' reflects Michelle. And the combination of dark wood and on-trend graphics with soft natural materials such as cream rugs and cushions are certainly testament to Michelle's ability to adapt her New York loft apartment style to London family living. 25



PLAYROOM
The lime green wall colour works well in a room with little natural light. Zebra, Rhino and Giraffe Savannah Story busts, £58 each, all Anthropologie. Esprit Spectrum Rug, £245, Woven Ground



BOYS' BATHROOM
Primary colours combined with fun decals make for a playful scheme in the children's bathroom. Wall decals, from £23, My Vinilo



BOYS' BEDROOM
This room is a stylish mix of vintage and new. Kallax shelving unit, £20, Ikea. Stompa Kool detachable bed, £399, Furniture Village

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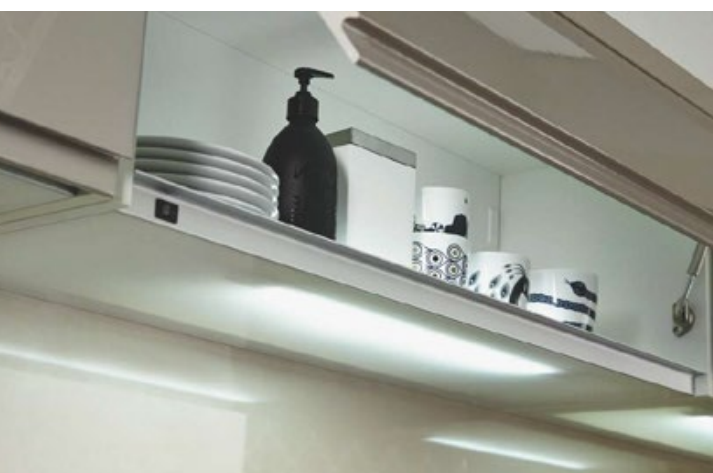
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UNIQUE



HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY Detached house built around 1912

LOCATION Denmark

ROOMS Hall, sitting room, playroom, TV room, family room, kitchen-diner, dining room, study, three bedrooms, cloakroom, two bathrooms, three basement rooms, laundry room

PURCHASED 2010

PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'We lived in the countryside, in a property attached to an old castle,' says Charlotte.

SHADE CREATIVE

An imaginative use of bright, bold colours matched with carefully curated curios make a big impression in Charlotte and Philippe Gueniau's eye-catching home

FEATURE SARA BIRD | **PHOTOGRAPHY** PERNILLE KAALUND/IDECOR IMAGES



DINING ROOM

The table and painted chairs lend a fun feel.

For a range of colourful chalk furniture paints try Annie Sloan, £18.95 for 1 litre

FAVOURITE ROOM *'It depends on the hour of the day, but I love my kitchen at almost any time'*



KITCHEN

A galvanized steel worktop is a practical and stylish finish that reflects light into the room.

Lavender Blossom 1 gloss, £35 for 2.5 litres, from Dulux, is a good match for the shelving unit. Kitchenware from a selection at Rice



J'AIME CETTE PIÈCE.

DINING ROOM

Stylish bamboo chairs add a wow factor to a custom-made white wood table.

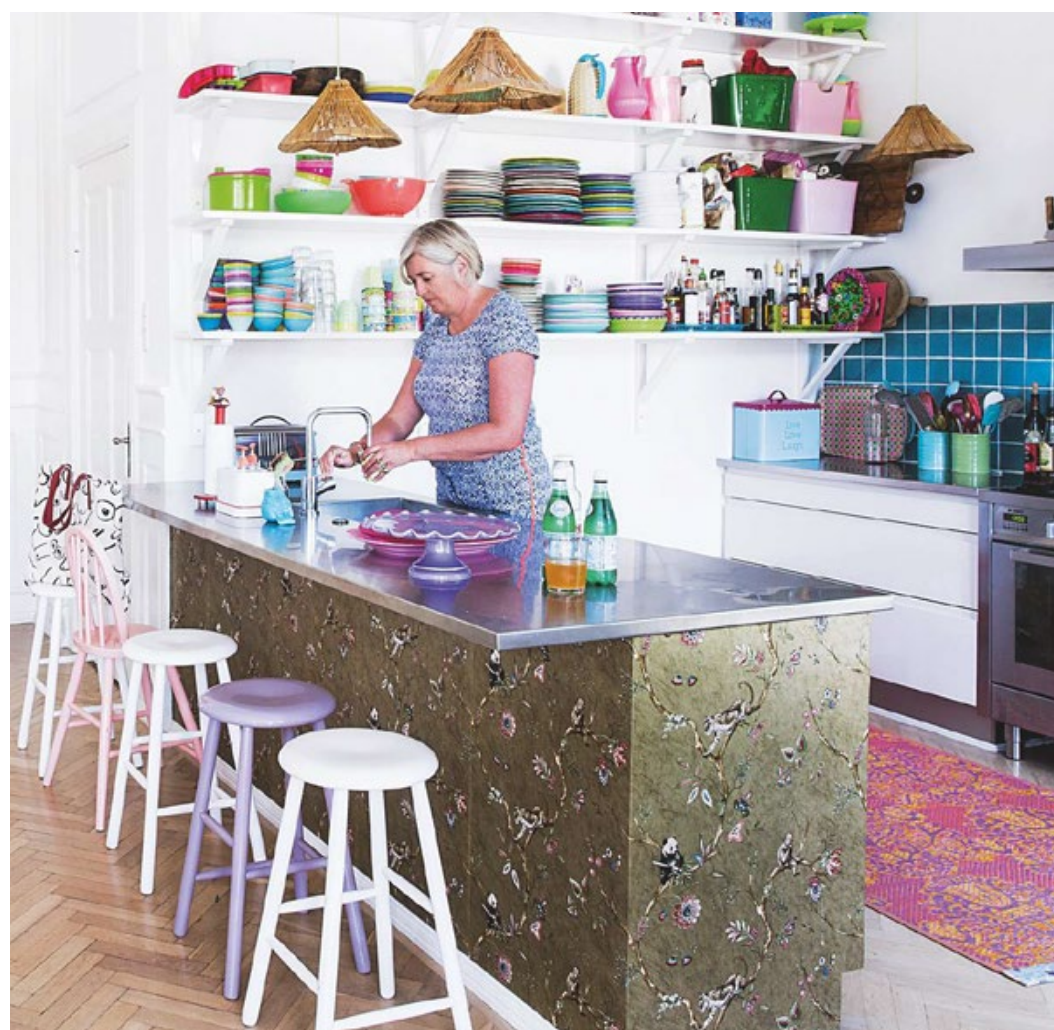
Curve rattan chairs, £216 each, Cane Line. The large rustic white wood table, £486, from Hampshire Furniture, is comparable

A flair for collecting and colour-combining is instantly evident when entering Charlotte Gueniau's vibrant Danish home. As founder and creative director of a homewares and accessory company, Charlotte has created a backdrop for her many treasures, and an energetic house in which her husband Philippe, children Max, 16, and Selma, 14, and their dogs can live and grow. But this wasn't always the case.

'We actually moved here initially for practical reasons,' explains Charlotte. 'We had lived in the countryside for nine years but our children went to school in the city and we knew that for their friends to be able to drop by and hang out, we needed to live close to the school.'

Even after buying the property, despite its size and scope, Charlotte wasn't won over. 'When we took over the house, it was very sterile-looking,' she says. 'It was cold, with no colour.' Regardless, with plenty of rooms, large windows and high ceilings, it was easy to see how it could work with Charlotte's busy lifestyle, and be transformed by her vibrant schemes.

Charlotte's dream was to create an upbeat version of a well-lived-in country home, where she could marry traditional elements including classic wallpapers, heirloom furniture and vintage porcelain with bright hues, contemporary designs and everyday high-street buys. 'When it came to decorating, we did everything at once – we're very impatient people,' laughs Charlotte. 'I love moving and the energy it brings, and I'm lucky that





FAMILY ROOM

A trio of retro tables provide the perfect place for bright vases and games while vibrantly patterned cushions and upholstery add pops of colour to plain white sofas.

Karlstad white sofas, £300, from Ikea are a good match. Orion set of 3 tables, £99 for 3, from Made are similar. For curtains like these try Linara Moroccan Blue, £34.50m, Romo. Square cotton cushion cover with hand-embroidered flowers, £49.99, Rice

FAVOURITE ITEM *'I particularly love all my colourful kitchen accessories, as each single item*



1 HALL

A tonal leaf and spring flower wallpaper adds definition to this large and lofty space.

No 12 Patterned Paint Roller, £15, The Painted House, offers a similar style

2 DRAWING ROOM

A peach coloured cupboard creates a striking look against pale green walls.

Forest Falls 4 eggshell, £24.49 for 2.5 litres, Dulux, is a good match for the wall paint





TV ROOM
Chesterfield-style armchairs upholstered in rich purple add depth to the marine wall paint.
 Crystal Surprise 2 vinyl matt emulsion, £24.49 for 2.5 litres, Dulux is similar to this wall paint. The London Sofa chair is similar to these armchairs, £1,000, Chesterfields of England

brings me joy in new and surprising ways every day'



3 LANDING
Pretty pink walls are complemented by matching rugs and accessories.
 Vintage Mint No. 91 floor paint, £57 for 2.5 litres, Designers Guild, is a similar finish. The Kabbleka wool rug, £215, Gudrun Sjödén has a comparable feel

4 MASTER BEDROOM
Blue patterned wallpaper serves as a backdrop for a pair of eye-catching curtains.
 Floor painted in Indian Ocean No. 71 floor paint, £57 for 2.5 litres, Designers Guild, would give a similar colour result





CLOAKROOM
Lend personality to a bathroom scheme with quirky wall decals. Penguin Library wallpaper has a similar style, £70 per roll, Wallpaper Direct



SELMA'S BEDROOM
Splashes of pink and purple lend a feminine feel to this neutral scheme. Hyder Purity white metal bedstead, £100, Bedroom World

I can organise things in such a way so, within a few days, it looks as though we've lived somewhere forever.'

The first big change was the kitchen, originally a series of interconnecting rooms. Charlotte wanted to knock through and create one large open-plan kitchen-diner. This generous space now contains many different seating and eating areas, including a large steel-topped breakfast bar, a bespoke dining table and some additional sofa seating. For this busy space, Charlotte opted for a white paint shade on the walls that acts as a perfect backdrop for her colourful kitchenalia, while warmth is added with herringbone parquet flooring and modern bamboo dining chairs. Looking straight out on to the garden, the kitchen has also become a very sociable space. 'We made a huge terrace just outside and a swimming area beyond,' says Charlotte. 'An old shed next to the pool has also been converted to create a guesthouse.'

Paint was the main tool for change in the rest of the house, which features many of Charlotte's favourite colours. Plenty of natural daylight from the large windows meant she could be brave and bold with her palette. Used to great effect on many of the walls, floors and a host of collected pieces of furniture, her chosen shades allow the rooms to flow from one to another with ease, from one colour pop to the next.

As practical moves go, this multicoloured home has proved to be a popular and winning formula for the family. 'We bought with the head not the heart, which felt a little risky,' says Charlotte. 'But now, we love it.' 25



SELMA'S BEDROOM
Decorative tree wall stickers add character to white walls. The Renoir rattan swing chair, £400, Burford Barn, is similar to this one. Hemnes dressing table, £200, Ikea

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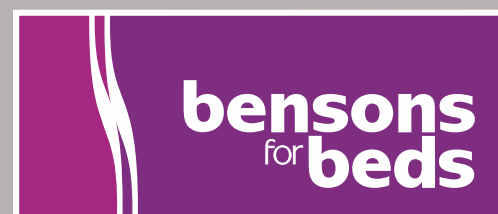
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THE RIGHT MIX

Blending period style with strong modern design flair lent character to Sharon Beggan and Declan McEvoy's Dublin family home

FEATURE PENNY CRAWFORD-COLLINS
PHOTOGRAPHY PHILIP LAUTERBACH

DISTINCTIVE



HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY Detached Victorian double-fronted house

LOCATION Dublin

ROOMS Hall, sitting room, kitchen-diner, utility, study, TV room, five bedrooms (one en suite) three bathrooms

PURCHASED 2010

PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'We lived in a Victorian-style home near Kew Gardens,' says Sharon.

DINING AREA

A large table and artwork by friends of Sharon's creates a cosy, personal space.

For a similar design try Hemingway extending dining table, £2,250; the Maharani upholstered dining chair in Riga Stripe is similar, £175 each, all John Lewis. Marble fire surround, from £4,800, Ryan and Smith



HALL

Architectural features are painted a bold shade, creating a striking effect.

Archway and woodwork painted in Down Pipe estate eggshell; side table painted in Incarnadine estate eggshell, both £53, for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball. Koldby cowhide, £180, Ikea. Kartell Bourgie table lamp, £210, John Lewis



KITCHEN
The Aga gives the room a more traditional look and keeps the space warm in the winter. Bespoke Shaker-style kitchen, Newcastle Design. Maskros pendant light, £90, Ikea. Retro Metro Swiss Cottage wall tiles, £63.73sq m, Fired Earth. Magis Bombo bar stools in graphite, £399 each, John Lewis





Having decided to move back to Ireland from London, Sharon Beggan, an interior designer, and her partner Declan McEvoy, were keen to find a home that would suit them and their three children, Oisín, 17, Tadhg, 14, and Siofradh, 12. It was a Victorian property in Dublin that drew their attention, and they knew that, with a lot of work, the interior could be just as striking, as the elegant exterior and had the potential to be transformed into a spacious family home.

‘We could see that the house was sound and it had lovely proportions, with a charming staircase leading up to the front door,’ says Sharon. ‘Even though it was split up into a warren of bedsits and offices, the shells of the rooms were there, with lovely high ceilings and many of the original features intact.’

Sharon had firm ideas on how she wanted the house to look. ‘It’s a protected structure so we had to adhere to very strict planning regulations – we weren’t even allowed to change any of the glass in the

windows – and we had great problems convincing the planners to let us have the kitchen on the first floor,’ she says. ‘We didn’t add anything to the house; we just brought it back to life and updated it, while still preserving its history.’ The couple decided to tackle the project over a period of three years. ‘Although the house needed a lot of work, we didn’t get it for a bargain, so we had to be clever with the restoration and allocate our funds accordingly,’ explains Sharon.

The first stage was to gut the whole building, rewire, replumb, fit a new heating system and insulate. Then, all the original cornicing and ceiling roses were restored and layers of paint were stripped off the shutters, most of which were in good order. ‘Some of the fireplaces were missing, so we went to great lengths to source replacements that suited the period of the house,’ says Sharon. ‘We also put in a new staircase leading from the basement to the first floor and incorporated one of the smaller bedrooms into the master bedroom to make an en suite and walk-in

SITTING ROOM Combine modern sofas and artwork with a traditional backdrop for an eclectic look.

The Ashton sofa is a good match, from £1,300, Laura Ashley. Walls painted in Elephant’s Breath estate emulsion, £38 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball. Pip walnut-stained table lamp, £25, Habitat, is comparable. For a similar coffee table try the Soul Granville design, £875, Arnotts. Douglas fir flooring, from £106.80sq m, Dinesen

BEST BUY *'The wide flooring that features in many of the rooms – it looks really good and is easy to keep and gives a lovely modern contrast in this traditional setting'*



MASTER BEDROOM
Calming colours and a traditional wrought-iron bed give this room an air of elegance.

Walls painted in Dove Tale estate emulsion, £38 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball. The Camolin bedstead is a match, £999, The Original Bedstead Company. Willis and Gambier Lille beside chest, £481, Arnotts, is similar



EN SUITE

Choosing a glass shower cubicle and sanitaryware that appears to float boosts the sense of space. Retro Metro Swiss Cottage tiles as before. Walls painted in Purbeck Stone estate emulsion, £38 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball



BATHROOM

A slipper bath is teamed with simple wood panelling and elegant marble flooring for a classic look. Victorian panelling, from £17 for a 800x 600mm sheet, The English Panelling Company. For a similar bath try Vitale roll top slipper bath, £1,400, Homebase



1



2



3



4

wardrobe.' Once the major structural work was done, Sharon turned her attention to decor and finishings. 'I wanted the house to be a bit different, with a contemporary twist,' she says. 'The wide-planked Douglas fir flooring was exactly what I wanted, even though it had to be ordered from Denmark and have specialist fitters come over from London. I decided to use it on the entire first floor, which really gives the house a modern feel. It also dictated my choice of kitchen and the colour palette of greys and whites.'

The kitchen was one of the last jobs the couple tackled. They had fitted an Aga but had been living with a makeshift kitchen over the years, waiting until they had the budget for a bespoke scheme. 'I love the simplicity of Shaker-style units, so the design was based around this,' explains Sharon. 'It had to be simple and uncluttered, with a slightly traditional look. I didn't want any wall-hung cabinets but needed plenty of storage, so there's a bank of tall cupboards to one side, low units to the other side and, to create more workspace, I had a modern central island made. This space also houses a large dining table.'

Although the project took a long time, Sharon and Declan have brought this period house up-to-date, creating a bright, practical and comfortable family home without losing any of its period charm. 'We are both really pleased this house feels like home,' says Sharon. 'Now it's finally finished, we both agree that it was definitely worth the wait.' 25

1 TADHG'S BEDROOM
In a teenager's room, a neutral scheme and moveable displays means the room can be updated as tastes change.

Porterhouse single bed is a close match, £550, Aspace. Adum rug, £35; for a similar blue lamp try Lampan, £2.75, both Ikea

2 SIOFRADH'S BEDROOM
Books are grouped by colour for an attractive display.

For a similar bed try the Belvoir, £550; the Belvoir chest of drawers is comparable, £750, both Aspace

3 & 4 STUDY
A practical space with plenty of storage provides an ideal work area.

The Linnmon/Adils table, £14.90; Alex drawer unit, £60; and Falster chair, £45, all Ikea, are similar



REPLANNED

HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY

1950s house, extended in 2013

LOCATION Dublin

ROOMS Hall, sitting room, kitchen-diner/family room, utility room, cloakroom, four bedrooms (one en suite), two bathrooms

PURCHASED 2010

PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'This is the first home we've bought together,' says Martin. 'Before moving here, we lived in rented accommodation.'

FAMILY ROOM
Walls were removed to create one large open-plan space and bifold doors were added to bring in light.

For a similar sofa try the Carmo, from £3,359, BoConcept. Arte Espina Colour Festival rug, from £85, Fringes Rugs



CREATIVE spark

Heather and Martin Wallace revamped a tired suburban semi
with contemporary panache and quite a few surprises

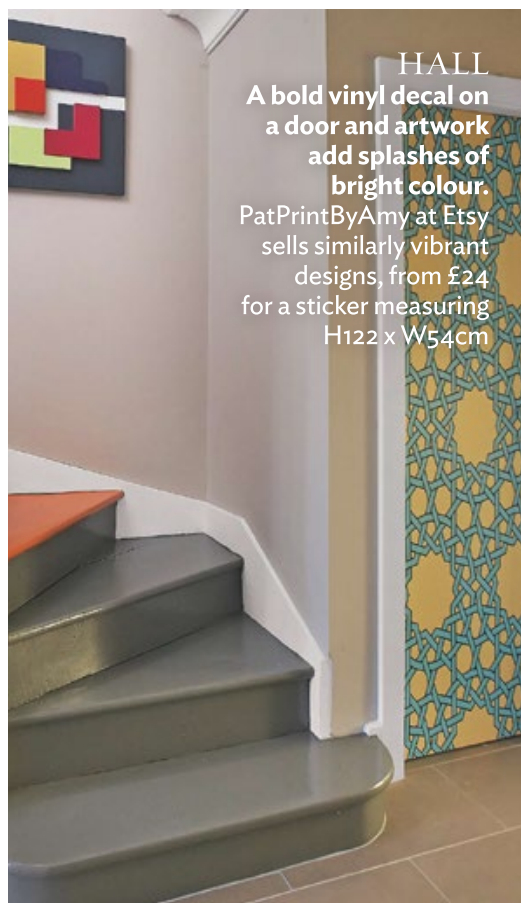
FEATURE & PHOTOGRAPHY BARBARA EGAN/REPORTAGE



DINING AREA

'We wanted a table that we could roll out into the garden in summer, so our designer made this one from steel and scaffolding planks,' says Heather. Table, £600, designed by Joanne Kelly of Think Contemporary. LU 31432/41 Fabric pendant, £140, Hicken Lighting. Eames DSW replica dining chairs £49.99 each, Lakeland Furniture

INSPIRATION 'We both travel extensively for our work, and brought back ideas from other places, such as New York and its Soho neighbourhood. We liked the vintage and industrial furniture we saw there and copied the look, adding points of colour for interest'

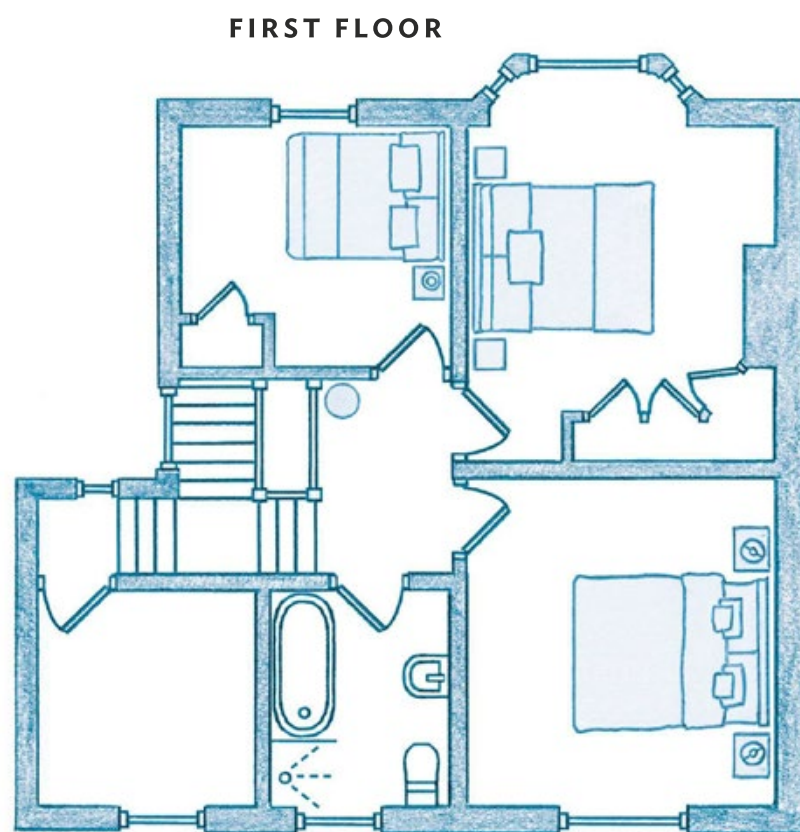
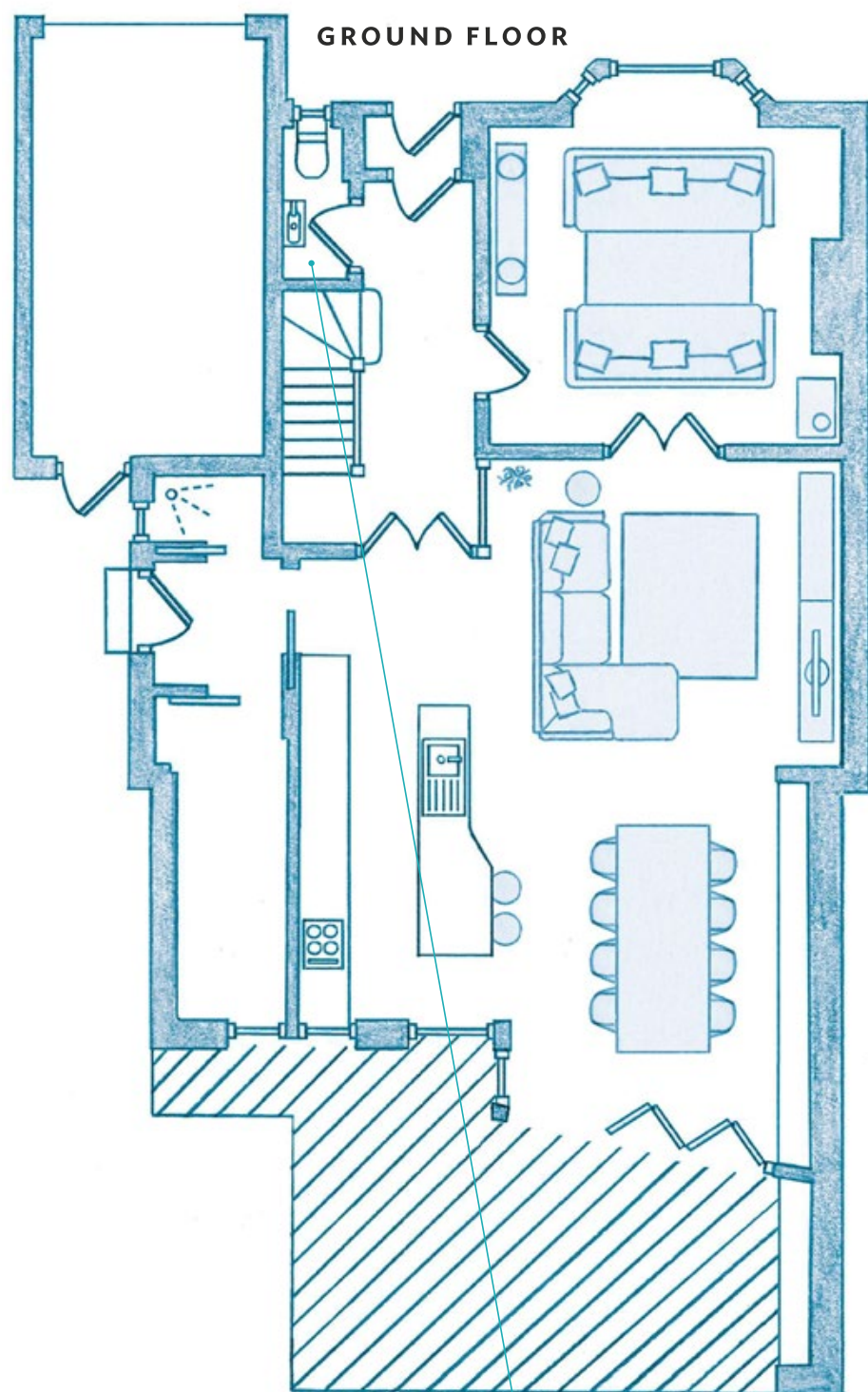


HALL

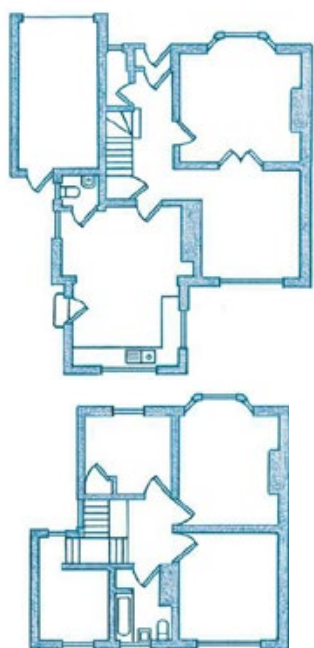
A bold vinyl decal on a door and artwork add splashes of bright colour. PatPrintByAmy at Etsy sells similarly vibrant designs, from £24 for a sticker measuring H122 x W54cm



AFTER



BEFORE



BATHROOM

Cuttings taken from 1950s newspapers found under the floorboards have been framed as a quirky display reflecting the history of the house. Ribba, Virserum and Strömby frames, from £4, Ikea. For a similar basin try the Balterley Piccolo, £49, Bigbathroom shop.co.uk



Martin and Heather Wallace were looking for their first home together and this south Dublin suburb had everything they wanted. 'It's between the city and the mountains,' says Martin. 'I'm a keen cyclist so I love it here, but it's also really close to all transport access for work.'

'The rooms had good proportions, the light was stunning, plus there was a big garden,' adds Heather. But it took a good eye to spot the potential under the decor, which had last been renewed in 1979, as the couple discovered when they took up the carpets and found old newspapers underneath.

The house needed lots of work and the couple's first job was to replace all the windows with double-glazed ones. They then stripped out all the carpets on the ground floor to expose the old pine boards, which created a problem. 'There was a metre of space under the suspended timber

and wind would howl through the gaps,' explains Martin. 'When I came one night to find Heather watching TV wearing a jacket, gloves and earmuffs I knew it was time to make a plan for the future.'

The couple started to research styles for their home, but, as busy people who travel a lot for work, the project dragged on. 'We wanted a quirky and creative look, but needed someone who could pull it together,' says Martin.

He decided to approach Dublin design company Think Contemporary. 'We looked at the portfolio and liked the mix of neutrals and splashes of colour,' says Martin. After a consultation with the firm's designers, Anthony and Joanne, the couple realised they needed a lot more space and perhaps should consider an extension. 'It was back to the drawing board and we had to work out what we could afford to spend,' says Martin.

Fortunately, the annual Simon Open Door event was taking place, where architects

BATHROOM

Large black textured tiles provide a striking backdrop to the freestanding bath.

Bari bath, £600, Better Bathrooms, is comparable. Form white cube shelving, £20 for a set of three, B&Q, would also look good here



DESIGN TIP
'Take your time and don't be afraid to push the boundaries. Your designer will know if an idea is going to work, so go for what you want'

donate their time to raise money for a homeless charity, and there they met architect Fionnuala O'Connor from Urban Architecture. She created a sketch there and then. Martin and Heather decided to employ the company to design their extension, while Think Contemporary would take care of fittings and finishes.

'Our brief was to create an open-plan sitting room/kitchen-diner that opened on to the garden,' says Heather. 'We also wanted a utility and a shower room by the door, which Martin could use when he comes in from a cycle.'

It was important that we preserve the 1950s feel of the house, and to integrate the history of the people who've lived here over the years, but we also had to give the experts their creative freedom,' says Martin. 'It worked well and Fionnuala came up with some great ideas on using space that we'd never have thought of.'

'The open-plan room has completely changed the way we live,' continues Martin. 'It allows us to be in the same space doing different things – reading, working, cooking or watching TV, without disturbing the other. The garden has also become part of the house, more visible and accessible. It took us a while, but we've gained enormously from the project.' 25

BEDROOM

A canopy painted in a contrasting shade on the wall and ceiling creates an eye-catching feature.

VE LV 50120 BMW pendants, £105 each, from Hicken Lighting. For a similar cushion try Missoni Home's Margot, £194, Amara





BE INSPIRED AT HARVEYS

Jarrow dining table shown with Vieux chairs.

harveysfurniture.co.uk

Harveys
the furniture store



REPLANNED

HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY

1930s bungalow, extended extensively in 2005

LOCATION Devon

ROOMS Sitting room/kitchen-diner, cloakroom, four bedrooms (all en suite)

PURCHASED 2012

PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'The last place we bought was a Grade II listed 17th-century house in Oxfordshire,' says Felix.

HAPPY ENDING

Just when crime author Felix Francis and his wife Debbie were about to call off the search, they found this idyllic coastal retreat

FEATURE BEVERLEY BYRNE | **PHOTOGRAPHY** COLIN POOLE



SITTING ROOM

Colourful paintings and furnishings lend warmth to this simple scheme.

Ektorp sofa, from £368, Ikea. Tripod standard lamp, £250, Dupère Design. Bespoke oak coffee table with inlaid ammonite, Andre Daniels, Artisan Homes



TERRACE
Views along the estuary can be enjoyed from this sunny spot. Chair with cushion, £265; round table, £780, both Pesaro range, Neptune

Setting off for a relaxing break in Devon, Felix and Debbie Francis had no thoughts of buying a holiday home. 'I'd recently finished my latest book, *Bloodline*, when Debbie suggested a holiday would do me the world of good,' explains Felix, son of the late novelist Dick Francis. 'We checked into the beach house at Burgh

Island Hotel and spent each day gazing upon the hypnotic seascape, wishing we could wake up to views like this more often. So we decided to look for a holiday home in the region.'

Unfortunately, the couple's impulsive quest soon ran into choppy waters. 'Having seen some unsuitable properties, we were rather disheartened,' says Debbie. 'But before

calling it a day, I was keen to view one more in a pretty fishing village on the Yealm Estuary. Felix thought it would be another wild goose chase and wasn't at all keen.'

The pair weren't initially impressed, as the exterior looked far from encouraging. 'Once we'd explored inside, however, all our frustrations faded away,' recalls Debbie. 'We



KITCHEN-DINER

It was fortunate that this generous open-plan space needed little alteration. Sorrento kitchen bar stools, £100 each, Simply Bar Stools. Bespoke oak chair, £199; bench, £299; dining table, from £1,350, all Andre Daniels at Artisan Homes



both stood on the terrace, marvelling at the spectacular views and knew this was the one.'

Apart from the panorama, there were other advantages to the property. Formerly a bungalow built in the 1930s, it had been extended by the previous owners to include a large kitchen and two new first-floor en-suite bedrooms. 'We'd recently spent

three years renovating our home in Oxfordshire and we didn't want to tackle a big project again,' says Debbie. 'With some simple adjustments, we were able to move into this place and enjoy the beautiful surroundings almost immediately.'

When it came to designing the interior, the couple found it surprisingly easy to

compromise. 'We agree on most things except interior design, but here we've somehow managed a meeting of minds,' explains Debbie. 'Felix is brilliant at seeing the bigger picture and suggesting structural changes, but on the subject of furniture, soft furnishings and fittings, we often disagree. I love the shabby chic, boho look with plenty



GUEST BEDROOM

'I love the splash of colour in this ground-floor room,' says Debbie. Cushions, £16 each, Next. Harlequin Caspia duvet cover, £75; pillowcases, £20 each, all House of Fraser, have this look



MASTER EN SUITE

This light-filled room was an invaluable addition. The Ithaca shower enclosure, £1,430, Fired Earth, is similar



PERIOD DETACHED

GUEST BEDROOM

A red, white and blue palette makes a bold statement. Prints, £35 each; cushions, £40 each, all Dupère Design

DECORATING ADVICE *'To find something unique for your home, shop locally and commission pieces from craftsmen in the area'*



MASTER BEDROOM

Inherited white wicker furniture give this scheme a Caribbean vibe. Awning Stripe Seaspray is a similar cushion and valance fabric, £32m, Laura Ashley. Wool Blanket Online sells pure-wool throws, from £50

of scatter cushions, which unsurprisingly isn't Felix's cup of tea at all,' she adds.

Working with the existing wall colours, blue-and-white pieces are teamed with striking fabrics and fun accessories. 'I'm happy to go for something that fits and doesn't cost a fortune,' says Debbie. 'But I also like good-quality statement-making

fabrics, particularly in the bedrooms.' The couple have also recycled items from previous homes and commissioned furniture from local craftsmen. 'As we didn't have to spend much on structural work, we treated ourselves to some bespoke pieces,' says Felix.

Now Debbie and Felix visit their riverside property as often as their busy schedules

allow. 'We live a simple life down here, taking walks with the dogs, enjoying a pub lunch in the village or an alfresco supper on the terrace, while watching the sun set over the creek,' says Debbie. 'And Felix finds writing here especially inspirational. The only downside to finding this little corner of peace and serenity is that we never want to leave it.' 25

What you smell

What your
guests smell



Have you gone noseblind?

Febreze eliminates odours, so you can truly enjoy
the light, fresh scents of Ambi Pur.



Breathe Happy

NEW-BUILD



HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY A new-build, four-bedroom, detached house clad in oak and render

LOCATION Monmouthshire

ROOMS Hall, sitting room/kitchen-diner, sun room, study, four bedrooms, bathroom, two shower rooms

PURCHASED 2013

PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'We lived in a Victorian basement flat in east London,' says Steven.

GREEN inspiration

Steven Harris and Catherine Roberts designed a zero-carbon home that's both stylish and affordable

FEATURE JANE CRITTENDEN | PHOTOGRAPHY JAMES FRENCH



SUN ROOM

This is separated from the downstairs area by inner glazed sliding doors that can be opened when it's warm to extend the space.

For similar chairs try Ercol Originals, £260, Pink Apple Designs. The Globe White Paper Pendant lampshade, £4, Lyon Lighting, would look good here





SITTING ROOM

'I made the bespoke bookshelves, which run the length of the space, from birch plywood we had cut to size by a joinery workshop,' says Steven. Stratford stove, from £1,187, Stoves Online. Reclaimed Welsh oak slate, £25sq m, Gallop and Rivers. For similar shelves try Kallax shelving unit in birch, £55, Ikea



KITCHEN

'These units were great value for money,' says Steven. 'We designed the layout and I fitted it out myself.'

IT Kitchens Walnut Style doors and panels, from £14, B&Q, would suit this room. White Ekbacken laminate worktop, £50; for a similar curtain fabric, try Revivva, £4m, both Ikea. Welsh slate floor tiles, £42sq m, Merionethshire Granite Company



DINING AREA

Oak flooring is used throughout the whole ground floor, and the couple restored the pew, reclaimed from a Welsh chapel. Character Oak flooring, £75sq m, ATC Flooring. Reproduction Arne Jacobsen 3107 chair, £39, Metro Furniture, would work here. Chelsea Church Chapel Oak Pew, £389, Antique Church Furnishings, is similar

LESSON LEARNT *'We thought we might lay the oak floor ourselves, but we're glad we didn't because the fitter was extremely skilful and did a brilliant job'*



SITTING AREA

'The line of sight flowing from front to back fools the eye into believing the house is bigger than it actually is,' says Catherine. The 1920s sofa and chairs were inherited and re-covered, for a similar style try Alexander & Pearl, from £1,195. For a blanket like this one, try Plaid Grey Shetland wool throw by Melin Tregwynt, £80, Pure Luxuries. Ikea's Morum rug, £25, is a near match to the one pictured

**LANDING**

For the walls, the couple chose greens and greys inspired by the landscape. Feature wall painted in Trilby, other walls painted in Kiwi, both Earthborn Claypaint, £25 for 2.5 litres, Eco Home Centre

**BATHROOM**

Frosted slot windows draw in plenty of light but offer maximum privacy. Euro Trio basin, £199, Bathstore. For a similar tap try Hansgrohe Axor Uno 2 Single Lever, £406, UK Kitchens

MASTER BEDROOM

This room has a delightful outlook towards the orchard at the back of the house. For a similar throw try Klippan Othello wool blanket, £132, Northlight Homestore



Architects Steven Harris and Catherine Roberts were determined to build their home in Wales on a very small budget – and create a zero-carbon house in the process. ‘We see this as the way forward,’ says Steven, who helped to design and build the first zero-carbon homes in the UK. ‘A house that needs so little energy it can almost run on renewable sources alone is cheap to live in and environmentally sound.’

One of the property’s smartest features is the glazed rear elevation where inner glass sliding doors create a separate sun room. The extra ‘skin’ keeps the house warm during winter and allows light in but, in the warmer months, the doors can be drawn back and the extra space used. The south-facing aspect plays an essential part in heating the home. Warmth from the sun is absorbed by the thermal mass in the concrete inner walls, stored, and gradually emitted back into the rooms. ‘On a sunny day in winter the house holds onto the heat for nearly a week afterwards,’ says Steven.

The project was an eight-year journey for the couple, who bought the plot in 2005. They began work in 2006 and a year later moved into a caravan on site. Catherine admits it was tough going, especially as she and Steven were also busy setting up their own practice, CRSH Architects. ‘We knew progress would be slow because we wanted to project manage and do as much of the work as we could ourselves,’ she explains.

Even now, Catherine says there are jobs to finish, like bathroom tiling and adding a green roof on the adjacent workshop. But the couple have achieved what they set out to do and the house is extremely energy efficient, with a design ethos that recognises affordable, sustainable solutions. Wood used to build the sun room balcony and Welsh slate tiles are just a few of the reclaimed materials, while lime-plastered walls and breathable, non-toxic eco paint keep the humidity stable. ‘This, more than anything, enhances our living as the air never feels dry or damp,’ explains Steven.

The couple are delighted with how the house has come together, and have proved it is possible to build an eco home on a relatively modest budget. ‘The result almost makes being zero-carbon secondary as that’s the way it should be,’ says Steven. ‘We hope one day zero-carbon living will be as normal as having an inside toilet, and people will wonder why they never did it before.’ 25

INSIGHT

Planning a zero-carbon build

Keen to build a carbon neutral home as Steven Harris and Catherine Roberts have done? Consider these points first



The right site, excellent insulation, renewable energy sources and eco building materials are all key factors in creating an efficient build. With these elements in place, your home can approach low impact or carbon neutral status and save money in the long run.

FROM THE GROUND UP

A carbon-neutral design doesn't need to cost the earth, and neither does style have to be compromised. Materials and building technology have advanced at an amazing rate, with high-performance glazing letting homeowners create bright, contemporary spaces full of light, space and flexibility. Renewable energy and recycling options are available, too, including solar roof panels and ground-source heat pumps, which extract heat from the ground to create hot water and heating. Rainwater harvesting, which gathers and recycles rainwater for use in bathrooms, washing machines and gardens, is another option. You may still need to combine these with conventional energy sources but your home will be significantly more eco-friendly.

BEAR IN MIND

Keep your design simple. Steven and Catherine built their home using standard blockwork cavity walls – with a 300mm cavity rather than 75mm – stuffed with Rockwool cavity batt insulation. Outside, the blocks are lime rendered and internally the walls are lime plastered and clay-painted. Lime regulates humidity, which makes for a far more comfortable environment to live in and this approach is aesthetically pleasing, too. An oversized solar thermal array and woodburning stove connected to a thermal store meet all the hot water and space heating needs in Steve and Catherine's house, while Solar PVs deliver electricity. Being airtight is important in zero-carbon designs to stop draughts and keep warmth in, so a heat recovery ventilation system is important. Finally, consider thermal mass. Site your home in a south-facing position and use high-quality insulated walls and glazing. The passive solar gain from a south-facing elevation will be absorbed into the walls and glass, where it is stored and gradually released back into the home. There are initiatives to help offset the costs for these installations – find details at the Energy Saving Trust.

PROFESSIONAL ADVICE...



● 'Achieving zero carbon has a great deal to do with how the building is positioned. South-facing windows bring in the greatest amount of daylight to reduce the need for artificial lighting, while a south-facing roof is the best position for solar or PV panels to generate energy on site.'

● **Think beyond traditional construction**

methods. A prefabricated timber frame construction method can create a home with excellent thermal efficiency.

● Insulation is key – use timber shavings to create exceptionally effective insulation that keeps houses warm in winter and cool in summer. Upgrading insulation is one of the first things to consider if you want to reduce the energy consumption of an existing house.

● **A vast array of sustainable technology is available to reduce energy consumption – from on-site power generation such as solar or PV panels, to heat recovery units that minimise wasted energy from ventilation systems, or highly efficient boilers. An architect will be able to advise you on what best suits your house, its location and your budget. Think about the smaller things, too – such as low-energy light fittings or low-water-use sanitaryware.**

● There's no need to compromise on appearance to achieve outstandingly low energy results. Consider 100% natural and sustainable materials, and choose an experienced team of architects and designers to produce a beautiful and sustainable home.'

OLIVER REHM, BAUFRTZ UK

ADDRESS BOOK

● THE BUILDING CENTRE

020 7692 4000,

buildingcentre.co.uk

An independent forum providing information on construction products and materials.

● ASSOCIATION OF ENVIRONMENTALLY CONSCIOUS BUILDING

0845 4569773, aecb.net

A network of individuals,

students, educational establishments and companies with a common aim of promoting sustainable building.

● THE ENERGY SAVING TRUST

0300 123 1234,

energysavingtrust.org.uk

Information on how to save energy in your home and how to generate your own energy.

MAKING WAVES

Sarah Assael reworked her London home with a little advice from her architect husband John – while he was mid-ocean

FEATURE JO LEEVERS | PHOTOGRAPHY RICHARD GADSBY



REPLANNED



HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY Detached Edwardian house

LOCATION Southwest London

ROOMS Hall, sitting room/kitchen-diner, drawing room, TV den, study, five bedrooms (one en suite), two bathrooms

PURCHASED 2002

PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'We renovated a series of properties,' says Sarah.



'My style is contemporary,' says Sarah Assael, 'but it always has to work in harmony with a property's architecture.' It's this thoughtful approach that makes every space of her

Edwardian home a lesson in balanced beauty.

When Sarah and her husband, John, found this house 12 years ago, Sarah's interior design skills and John's expertise as an architect meant it was in line for a quality makeover. A dark-hued decor gave way to a lighter mood,

and John drew up plans to rework the ground floor, relocating the kitchen and removing a dated conservatory. Sarah visited the site regularly while the build was in progress, as did John – until the final six weeks when he had the opportunity to take part in a transatlantic yacht race. 'Final decisions on fixtures and fittings were negotiated over a dodgy satellite phone, with John in the middle of the ocean scaling 60ft waves,' says Sarah.

John returned to London to find the house transformed by his designs, with a

spacious, light dining area and a den for their children, Charlotte and Alex, then aged 14 and 12 respectively. Sarah used restful shades to create a flow through the open-plan areas and mixed family treasures with design classics. Artwork, including several black and white drawings, also adds depth to the spaces. 'Bringing together pieces from different eras keeps a look fresh,' says Sarah. And it's the couple's ability to cleverly combine a mixture of styles that gives this house its unique personality. 25



SITTING ROOM/DINING AREA

Sarah has mixed Mid-Century shapes, contemporary art and global artefacts into a perfectly poised whole.

For similar sofas try The Prezzo, from £1,466, Delcor.

Redenham coffee table, £1,680, Carew Jones.

Eileen Gray E1027 side table, £508, Aram Store.

Madelaine rug, £1,235sq m, William Yeoward

for The Rug Company. Walls painted in White

Tie estate emulsion, £38 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball



HALL
Sarah swaps her artwork around regularly so it can be seen in different lights and locations. Zero console table, £1,900, Decorus. Sitting Buddha, £24.90, India Jane, is similar to this one



DRAWING ROOM
‘We call this the “Christmas room” because the children used to open their presents here,’ says Sarah. Turquoise painting by Lydia Mammes at Lisa Norris Gallery, price on request. Faux fur throw, £125, Oka. The Hempton sofa, £2,950, Wesley Barrell, is similar. Kristal table lamp, £277, Flambeau Lighting at The Light Company



KITCHEN
The kitchen is a warm, glossy mix of monochrome and taupe shades. Kitchen by Doca at Gemini Design, from £25,000. The Munich bar stool, £49.50, Atlantic Shopping, is similar to these

STUDY

'This is where I gather my ideas,' says Sarah. 'It's a calm space.'

The Iggy sofa, £1,390, Sofa.com, is similar to the one shown. The Pedro oak dining chair, £99.50, Atlantic Shopping, would work here



GUEST BEDROOM

Sarah chose silk textures to add a touch of luxury.

Albany quilt, £275, The White Company, is a good match. Cheetah fabric, £36m, John Lewis, is similar to the fabric on the ottoman. Taupe silk curtains, price on request, from a selection by Helen Turkington



DESIGN TIP
'Use flooring to link spaces. Limestone tiles can flow from one room to the next, while a well-chosen rug can bring a scheme together'



BATHROOM

A console table and mirror give this tranquil room an easy elegance.

Bath and taps from CP Hart. Blind made in 7609/05 Kaya fabric, £75m, Kashta Collection by Romo. Tiles, from a selection at Capitol Design Studio

CHARLOTTE'S BEDROOM

'My daughter's room has quite an Asian feel,' says Sarah.

Canton four-poster bed, £1,295, Lombok. Velvet tub chair, £445,





COLOUR CONFIDENCE

Millie McCallum and George MacNicol decorated their first home together with vibrant tones and patterns

FEATURE VICTORIA TUNSTALL | PHOTOGRAPHY RACHAEL SMITH



DISTINCTIVE

HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY

Victorian terraced house

LOCATION South London

ROOMS Hall, sitting room, dining room, kitchen, three bedrooms, bathroom

PURCHASED 2011

PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'We were renting a flat in Notting Hill with one of George's friends,' says Millie.





3



2

I & 2 SITTING ROOM

White walls act as a blank canvas for colourful furnishings and paintings.

Try the Orson two-seater sofa in Tudor Red, £499, Made. Alvine Ruta flatwoven rug, £150, both Ikea. The Oken yellow folding side table is similar, £35, Habitat. The industrial red floor lamp is a good match, £120, Fusion Living

3 & 4 DINING AREA

Choosing a bold wallpaper on one wall adds instant interest to a room.

Map wallpaper, £125, Stanfords. Dublin dining table, £350, Habitat. The blue and white oriental ginger jar table lamp, is similar, £234, Universal Lighting Services. Painting, price on application Millie McCallum



4



FUTURE PLANS *'We'd like to convert the loft in a few years, to give us more room if our family gets bigger'*

After years of renting flats in west London, artist Millie McCallum and her husband George MacNicol, decided to buy their first house together. They had been searching for a while when they found a house in south London. 'Before I even saw it, I fell in love with the street,' says Millie. 'It was pretty, quiet, tree-lined, and had a good vibe about it.' The house itself was just what they were looking for – with lots of space and original features.

Although the property was in a good structural state, there were a few jobs that needed to be addressed immediately. The bathroom was tiny and needed a revamp, so Millie and George decided to get all the building work done before they moved in. 'It was pretty tough financially, renting and paying the mortgage for a couple of months – and we had just got married. But thankfully we were only paying mates' rates on a flat in Notting Hill,' says Millie.

To make the bathroom bigger, the builders took space from the back bedroom. They also fitted a new suite and redecorated both rooms. Downstairs, the doors between the front sitting room and dining room were removed to make one large reception room, and ceiling spotlights were installed throughout the house. In the kitchen, the wall units were ripped out. 'The space felt small and I'm not a fan of fully fitted kitchens,' says Millie. Every

day, Millie travelled to their house on the way to her art studio. 'We had great builders, but we still wanted to keep an eye on the work,' she says.

When the builders moved out, Millie and George moved in and began to decorate. 'I wanted a white house with bold elements,' says Millie. 'I knew if I started off with different-coloured rooms, it would all end up looking mismatched.' She painted the interior in a fresh coat of white and added furnishings in a vibrant palette.

In the dining room, she wallpapered a giant world map on one wall and stuck mirror tiles to the other wall. Millie has shopped around to find her eclectic treasures. 'I love antiques markets, car boot sales and second hand sales, but I love high-street shops, too,' she says.

It's clear that Millie is confident with colour. The risers on her staircase had been wallpapered, 'but it was looking tatty and I didn't want a runner,' she says. She decided instead to paint the stairs with a bright tropical mural. In her one-year-old son Woody's room, she painted a nautical scene on one wall and extended the blue sky over the ceiling.

Now, Millie, George and Woody are happily immersed in their colourful surroundings. 'When you get to decorate your first own home the way you want to, albeit on a budget, it's surprising just how good it all looks,' she says. **25**



2



3

1 KITCHEN

Accents in red, yellow and blue perk up this pale space. Gurli cushion covers, £2 each, Ikea. The extra-large red enamel pendant light is similar, £70, The Contemporary Home

2 MASTER BEDROOM

Bold-printed wallpaper and curtains complement each other thanks to the room's neutral elements.

Avalon Island Ikat wallpaper, £62 per roll, Tangletree Interiors. Tilia fabric, £30m, John Lewis. Try the Sillick clear lamp base, £50; and Fenn pleat silk shade in Duck Egg, from £18, both Laura Ashley

3 BATHROOM

A strong graphic wallpaper defines this scheme. Folie Parterre 99/2011 wallpaper is similar, price on application, Cole & Son. Pineapple laundry bin, £50, Zara Home. Metro white tiles, £19.50sq m, Topps Tiles

4 WOODY'S BEDROOM

Millie painted the mural. Mural, price on application, Millie McCallum



4



The power of soft.





DINING ROOM

The long table, which was from an antiques shop in Antwerp, has plenty of room for guests.

For comparable chairs, try the Isabelle design, £125 each, John Lewis. The round knife pleat shade in red, £9.99, Homebase, is just as bold

LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT

Martine Lescouhier's instinct paid off when she bought a farmhouse she'd seen only from the outside

FEATURE PENNY BOTTING | PHOTOGRAPHY GAP INTERIORS/BIEKE CLAESSENS



HALL

A local carpenter made the simple but useful bench.

Shanghai Garden Peony wallpaper, £79 per roll, Designers Guild, would create the same effect here



GARDEN ROOM

'It's so nice to sit here in spring when it's too cold to be outside,' says Martine. 'The sun heats the whole space.' Dessert loom occasional chair, £54.99, Wayfair, is a similar design



KITCHEN

'The floor tiles are an original feature,' says Martine. Plain Venetian Bonbon glass jar, £15, Brissi, would suit this room



DINING AREA

'The pictures of my family have the most sentimental value,' says Martine. For chairs like these try the natural wicker tub design, £195, Sustainable Furniture. Vintage Style Mannequins sells dressmaker's dummies, £175 each

FAVOURITE ROOM *'I love spending time in the sitting room when the fire's lit – it's really relaxing and especially cosy in winter'*



SITTING ROOM

'I love the old armchair, which I bought in Bruges,' says Martine. For a similar sheepskin rug try the Ludde, £25, Ikea. The Malone brass swing arm floor lamp, £160, Laura Ashley, is an attractive alternative



Martine Lescouhier was convinced this house was the one for her the moment she saw it 20 years ago. 'From the second I viewed the property I knew that I'd end up buying it,' she recalls. 'And that was without even looking inside or at the little guest house. Despite the fact that the place was almost a ruin, the atmosphere and the location were fantastic, plus it had the garden of my dreams.'

The key elements in Martine's search for a property included a spacious yet cosy house in a quiet neighbourhood, and somewhere not far from the sea – very different requirements from her last home, which was a classic villa built in the 1970s, in a residential quarter in the city of Diksmuide. 'This house had everything I wanted and more, including room for guests to stay.'

Fortunately, Martine didn't need planning permission for any of the changes she wanted to make, and also didn't need to do anything structural. 'I had to update the main living spaces and the roof, but the beams were in pretty good condition,' she says. Martine, who used to work in an interiors shop and now seasonally decorates the restaurants owned by her grown-up children, is inspired by homes magazines. 'Essentially,

I like lots of white and natural wood, plus a little bit of colour in a scheme works well, too,' she says. This is particularly evident in the sitting room, the walls of which are clad in tongue and groove. 'I painted them white and left the timber floor and ceiling bare, which created a lovely feeling of warmth. I did much of the decorating myself – it was a lot of work, but I enjoyed it,' she recalls.

Once Martine had finished the house, she was able to turn her attention to the barn, which she renovated for guests. 'I love having people to stay and now run a bed and breakfast,' she says. 'I wanted to give my guests a treat, so during the winter they can sit by the lovely fire in their sitting room with big windows overlooking the garden, and I also make their first breakfast for free.'

One of the best things about the arrangement is that the barn is separate from the main house, allowing Martine to have guests to stay while also maintaining her privacy. 'It means we all have our own space, yet contact when we want,' she says.

As for the future, Martine doesn't have any plans to alter things too much. 'I enjoy the company of the guests, but I also appreciate the fact that it's so calm and quiet here, and very close to the beach – the location really is unique and I wouldn't change it for the world,' she says. 25



HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY

An old farmhouse that was rebuilt after World War I

LOCATION

Nieuwpoort, Belgium

ROOMS Sitting room, garden room, kitchen, bedroom, bathroom. Guest house: sitting room, two bedrooms, bathroom

PURCHASED 1995

PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'I lived in a classic villa in a different city,' says Martine.

BATHROOM

White tongue-and-groove panelled walls give a beach-house feel.

The Masena mirror by Papa Theo, £156.07, Notonthehighstreet.com, is similarly rustic. Vero washbasin by Duravit, £159.60, CP Hart, would look good



BEDROOM

Martine made the blanket herself.

Ikea's Hemnes bedside table, £40, is similar



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DINING AREA

'The Marilyn Monroe picture is an actual Andy Warhol numbered print,' says Jack. John Lewis sells reproduction prints, from £55. For a similar period table try the Cherry double drop-leaf, £5,300, Antique Tables

INSPIRING



HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY A 1920s wood-shingle renovated cottage

LOCATION New York

ROOMS Sitting room, dining room, kitchen, pantry, study, four bedrooms (two en suite), two bathrooms. Carriage house: sitting room, bar, bedroom, bathroom. Guest house: kitchen, bedroom, bathroom

PURCHASED 1995

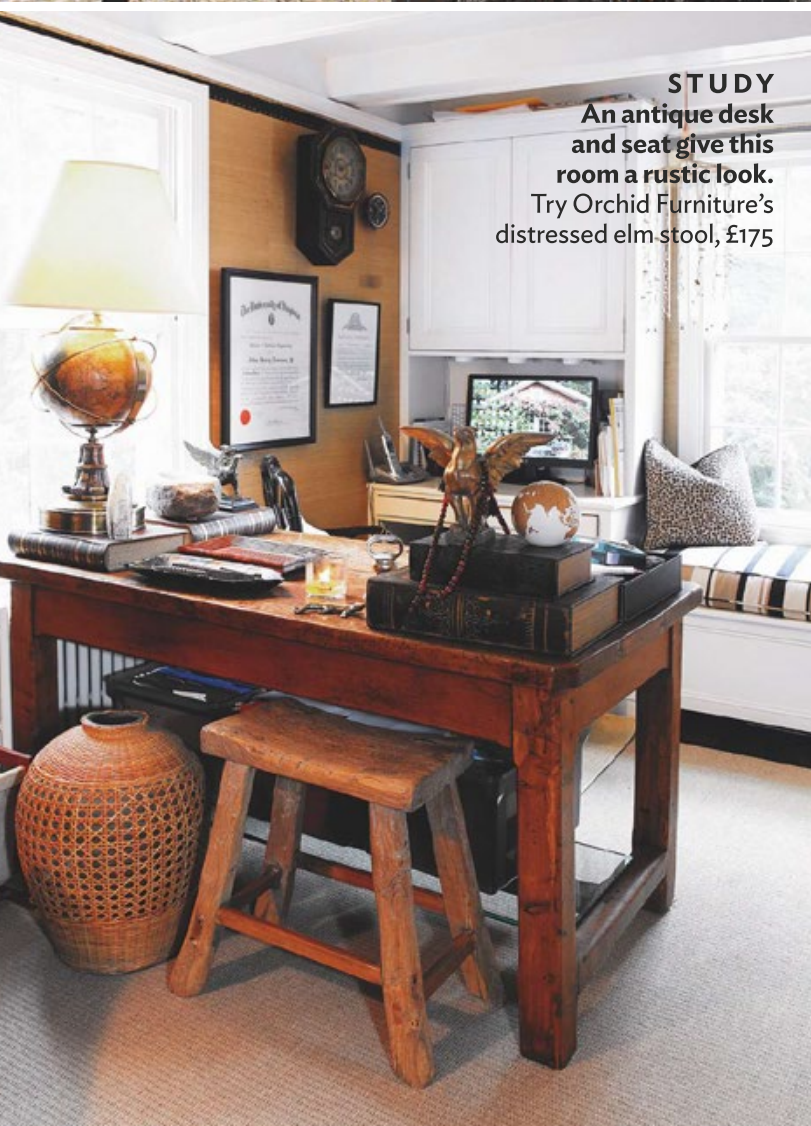
PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'I moved here from Manhattan,' says Jack. 'Before that I owned a large modern house in Dallas.'

American BEAUTY

Jack Pearson bought a 1920s property in New York and remodelled it into a stylishly eclectic home

FEATURE ROS CONNELLY | PHOTOGRAPHY GAP INTERIORS/COSTAS



STUDY
An antique desk
and seat give this
room a rustic look.
Try Orchid Furniture's
distressed elm stool, £175





SITTING ROOM
Jack introduced an Eastern flavour with Asian furnishings. The three-drawer low table, £945, Shimu, would work here



DINING ROOM
‘The mahogany sideboard dates back to the 1800s and was handed down through my family,’ says Jack. The Georgian round table, £1,150, from AKD Furniture, is a good match. For similar botanical prints try Royal Horticultural Society, from £20 each

New York real-estate broker Jack Pearson was looking for a historical cottage with a garden when he first saw his property. ‘It reminded me of the house in the film *Howard’s End*, it was in a ruinous yet charming state, with overgrown gardens,’ he recalls. ‘All the rooms were quite small, built with wood panels and pumpkin pine floors. Upstairs there were oak and teak floorboards, plus French windows and bay windows throughout. It was perfect – I saw the

coffered ceiling in the sitting room and 15 minutes later, I decided to buy the place,’ he adds.

The first thing Jack did after completing the sale was paint the interior. Then, over the next 20 years, he gradually updated the rooms. The house had been added on to from the 1940s to ‘60s, but there was a small galley kitchen and original bathrooms. ‘So I renovated the bathrooms and converted the attached two-car garage into a large kitchen-diner,’ says Jack. ‘I also raised the roof over the master suite, built a guest



KITCHEN
The pleasingly worn patina of the wood dining table adds warmth to this all-white scheme. For similar lights try the David Hunt BAD0163 Badger 1 traditional ceiling pendant, £99.50, Ocean Lighting. Tuck brushed steel stool, £55, Atlantic Shopping, has the same look



MASTER BATHROOM
A marble-topped basin and cylindrical wall lights create an Art Deco feel.

For a similar basin try the Double countertop from the Palomba collection, £1,190, Laufen. The Heathfield & Co Henri light, £122, Occa-Home, is comparable



MASTER BEDROOM

Jack went for a striking monochrome scheme.

Louis sleigh bed, £335, The Bed Warehouse Direct, is similarly bold. For a comparable chest try the rattan Indochine, £295, Oka

**DESIGN
ADVICE**

'If you hire a professional, listen to them, but make sure they share your vision'

cottage and a carriage house, put in a heated pool and spa waterfall, laid stone patios and landscaped the gardens. My architect James McChesney came up with the design for the renovation, as well as new outbuildings, which are all tucked away among the mature trees and shrubbery. The garden landscaping by Joseph Cornetta and myself helps them blend into the history of the place as a whole and connect with the main building.'

Inside the house, Jack worked with interior designer John Bjornen. 'Under his guidance, the property took its tasteful course,' he says. The original colour schemes they chose were quite different from

the ones Jack has today. 'We went for a bolder look at first, but these have now evolved into whites, neutral beiges and greys with navy accents.' One of the things that didn't change was the period features, which gave the house its charm and made Jack fall in love with it. 'My favourite room is the sitting room, with its coffered ceilings,' he says. 'I liked them so much, I had them duplicated for the master bedroom when I renovated it a few years ago.'

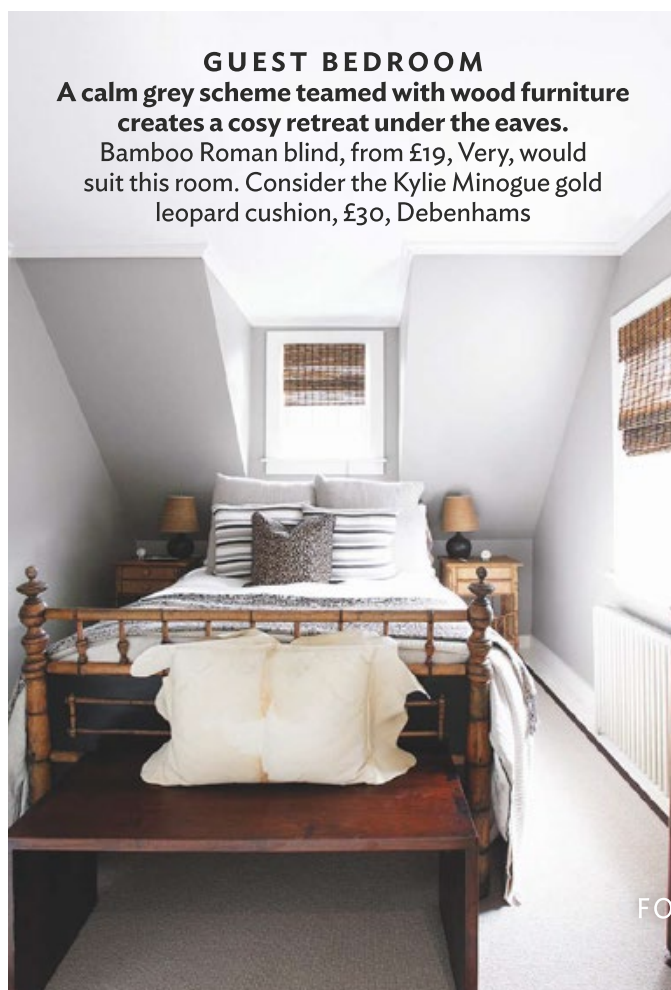
Jack's efforts have certainly paid off, as he is more than happy with the way the property works for him. 'My home is much more than just a house – it's a wonderfully peaceful retreat that feeds my soul.' 25



GUEST BEDROOM

Navy blue, crisp white and highlights of polished brass is a smart combination.

For an alternative table lamp try the Boston, £69, Hicks & Hicks. Scatter cushion in Midnight plush velvet, £45, Loaf, is identical



GUEST BEDROOM

A calm grey scheme teamed with wood furniture creates a cosy retreat under the eaves.

Bamboo Roman blind, from £19, Very, would suit this room. Consider the Kylie Minogue gold leopard cushion, £30, Debenhams



GUEST BEDROOM

Jack used accents of pale green to echo the natural colours in the garden.

Monaco mirror, £270, Ayers and Graces, is just as stylish. Try Turkish mosaic glass lamp, £12, Yashar-Bish

BE INSPIRED BY JACK'S GARDEN



A DREAM COME TRUE

Ursula McGillicuddy modernised this pretty Edwardian semi to create her perfect, spacious contemporary family home

FEATURE & PHOTOGRAPHY BARBARA EGAN /REPORTAGE

SITTING ROOM

This south-facing space can take cool grey tones very well, and Ursula has enlivened the scheme with touches of purple.

Wall colour, French Grey intelligent matt emulsion, £43.50 for 2.5 litres, Little Greene. Duresta Hornblower three-seater sofa, £5,460; Duresta Horatio footstool, £1,365, Arnotts. Painting of Trinity College, price on application, Chris Mc Morrow



REPLANNED



HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY

1900s semi detached home

LOCATION Dublin

ROOMS Hall, sitting room, childrens room/TV room), kitchen-diner, family room, utility, four bedrooms (two en suite), family bathroom, wet room/shower room

PURCHASED 2011

PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'We had a three-bedroom townhouse nearby,' says Ursula.



HALL

As the original stained-glass front door and surround was lost, the design for this was reproduced from a neighbouring house.

Bespoke front door and surround, Duffin Joinery.

Console table, £4,000, Michael Connell Antiques.

Round gold mirror, £225, Mylestone Interiors

SITTING ROOM

The elegant chandelier complements the classic ceiling plasterwork.

The Impex Bruges eight-light chandelier in polished brass would work here, £325, John Lewis. Leather magazine rack, £15, TK Maxx





KITCHEN-DINER/ FAMILY ROOM

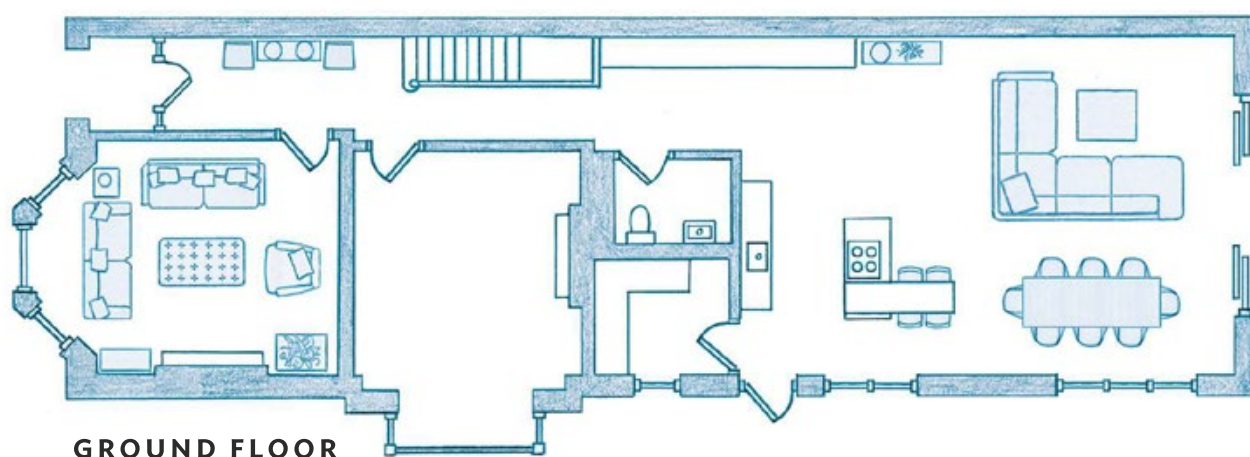
Mixing up the surface materials in this space creates a bespoke feel.

Kitchen units, bar stools, dining table, dining chairs; prices on application, all Houseworks. Pendant and track lighting, price on application, National Lighting. Barometer work lamp, £27, Ikea

A pretty Edwardian red brick house appealed to Ursula McGillicuddy as soon as she viewed it. She was searching for a new home for herself, her husband, Tim, and children, Jane, 16, and Henry, 13. 'We were looking for a bit more space with a proper garden,' she says. 'We looked at a lot of homes, but this one had something special. It's true that you can get a good feeling from a house the moment you step inside. It was when I looked up and saw the beautiful plasterwork in the reception rooms that I fell in love.'

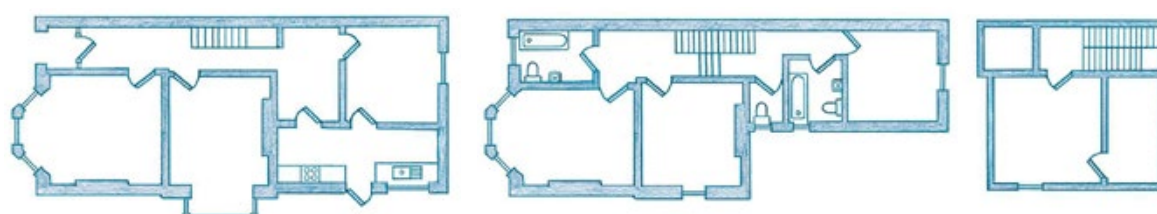
The layout of the house had changed little since it was built; the two front rooms were large reception areas with high ceilings, and the kitchen and breakfast room to the rear were small, without direct access to the garden. On the first floor were four bedrooms – one little more than a box – and the landing was disproportionately large. There was a single, tiny bathroom,

AFTER



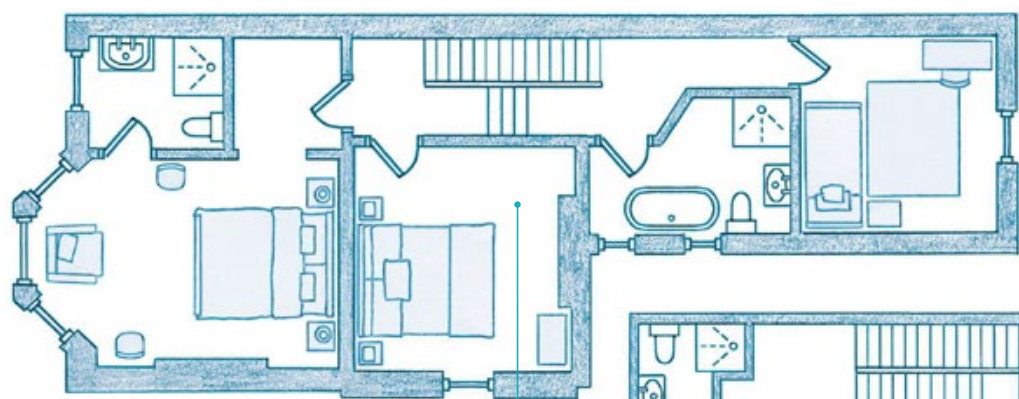
GROUND FLOOR

BEFORE





FAVOURITE SHOP *'Houseworks in Dublin is a one-stop shop for me. Its stock is very contemporary in style, and the furniture is superb quality; warm, sturdy, comfortable and stylish'*



FIRST FLOOR

REPLANNED

Extending the kitchen created a larger, brighter area for family living. A utility and guest cloakroom/wet room has also been incorporated. The large landing and a small box room have been reconfigured into a dressing room and en suite to the master bedroom; a bathroom and WC now form a larger family bathroom.



SECOND FLOOR

a cloakroom and a large attic space. 'It was traditional, but outdated,' says Ursula. She envisaged a big, open-plan kitchen/living/dining extension, leading onto a terraced area for eating outside in good weather. 'We were after additional cooking and living space, and the garden had to be more accessible. I loved the reception rooms, but thought they would work better being linked by interconnecting doors. We also needed a good-sized bathroom, en suites and a utility.'

She wanted a separate shower room for the children to use after sport, and to use the tiny box room as en suite to the master bedroom. Her architect also suggested making part of the large landing into a dressing room. While designing an en suite to go in the attic space, he proposed installing more roof lights for extra sunlight and luckily, the whole project was exempt from planning permission as the extension was to the rear of the house and



BATHROOM
The idea in this space was to achieve a streamlined look. Plantation shutters, £300 each, Window Fashions. Tiles, bath, tap, price on application, Versatile Bathrooms



MASTER BEDROOM
'I use this lovely sunny, spacious room for reading and relaxing in, too,' says Ursula. Antoinette Sleigh bed, £825; Antoinette bedside cabinets, £200 each, Mahogany Tree. Tall silver mirror, £300, Mylestone Interiors. Perfectly Taupe mixing matt is a similar wall paint colour, £24 for 2.5 litres, Dulux



HENRY'S ROOM
This is a practical space for a young boy, with a desk and trundle bed for sleepovers. The Osorno guest trundle bed is a match, £273, Bedroom World. Gant star single duvet cover, £100, Amara



JANE'S BEDROOM
Ursula wanted this room to last her daughter through school and college years. Malm desk, £89; Snille swivel chair, £15, both Ikea. Walls painted in Perfect Oyster mixing matt, £25 for 2.5 litres, Dulux

did not exceed allowable thresholds. Ursula also consulted with an insulation and heat-recovery specialist company to update the fabric of the house. They recommended fitting state-of-the-art insulation, double and triple glazing, and a heat-recovery system to reduce energy bills. The rear of the house was removed to prepare for the extension, the walls were stripped back to brickwork and the roof reconstructed. All original fireplaces were stripped out for refurbishment and the wall between the reception rooms knocked through.

Meanwhile, Ursula turned her attention to furnishing and finishing. In the sitting room, she decided on a contrast to the contemporary open-plan

FAVOURITE FEATURE
'The plasterwork on the reception room ceilings is beautiful – original and unique. It was in surprisingly good condition, too, so we didn't have to do any restoration work'

family area, opting for a more period look. 'In our last home, I had used very rich colours, ivory and gold,' she says. 'I wanted something fresher, and I love all the grey tones that are fashionable at the moment. I thought the deep purple curtains I chose for the master bedroom would look beautiful against a light grey, and that became my colour scheme for both the sitting room and bedroom.'

At last, the house has come together. 'From the first day we moved in, we just fell into living here as if we had never been anywhere else,' says Ursula. 'Family life revolves around the open-plan space as I'd envisaged – in fact all my ideas came to fruition. It's my dream home and I'm over the moon about it.' 25



OLD-WORLD CHARM

Andrew Roberts and Rupert Kirby's new home in the Algarve is a former girls' school full of traditional character

FEATURE SIAN LEWIS/NARRATIVES | **PHOTOGRAPHY** JULIA TOMS/NARRATIVES



TERRACE
Rich planting makes this an appealing spot for outdoor meals



SITTING ROOM
A comfy sofa piled high with scatter cushions in a variety of colours and fabrics is an invitation to relax.
Large Teddy sofa, from £1,299, Sofa Workshop. Velvet cushions, 50cm sq, £35 each, Marks & Spencer, would work well in this scheme



SITTING ROOM

'We use this fire in the winter even though the temperature only drops to about 21°C,' says Andrew.

The Strandmon wing chair in Skiftebo orange, £195, Ikea, has the same look. For a similar mirror try the Antique Gold Sunburst by The Forest & Co, £169, Notonthehighstreet.com

Andrew Roberts and Rupert Kirby had spent many years enjoying holidays in Portugal, and such was their affection for the country that they began finding it harder and harder to get on the plane home after each visit. So, in 2005, they decided that the time had come to say goodbye to London life and to try to find a permanent home on the Algarve. 'We spent several days looking at houses, and this was the very last one we viewed,' says Andrew. 'As soon as we walked in, both of us knew this was exactly what we wanted.'

They had dreamt of an old property with plenty of character, but didn't relish the idea of a huge renovation project. Luckily, a developer had already worked his magic on the house, which was originally a school, transforming a derelict wreck with the help of local craftsmen. He recreated some of the traditional touches,

such as ironwork grilles over the downstairs doors, which means the windows onto the street can be left open safely on summer days. He also fitted modern bathrooms and a new kitchen in keeping with the traditional Portuguese style.

'We came back to see the house for a second time the following February, and then it was pouring with rain,' says Andrew. 'They always say you should view properties out of season, as well. So we sat in a pavement café on the high street and wondered if we could actually imagine living here. We then made our way to the house and the minute we went inside, we knew the answer was "yes".'

Buying an overseas home turned out to be a painless process, thanks to an efficient lawyer recommended by a friend and, by July, they were on the plane to Portugal with one-way tickets. Andrew and Rupert were able to work with the developer to choose some of the finer

INSPIRING



HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY

19th-century converted townhouse, originally a school

LOCATION Algarve, Portugal

ROOMS Hall, sitting room, dining room, kitchen, four bedrooms (one en suite), four bathrooms

PURCHASED 2006

PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'We lived in a classic London townhouse before moving to Portugal,' says Andrew.



DINING ROOM
Colourful accessories create eye-catching features in this simple, understated area.
 Italian Lighting Centre sells a selection of Murano fruit glass chandeliers, from £738



KITCHEN
'My mum asked me to make something useful in woodwork at school,' says Rupert. 'I made this table, and it certainly has been useful.'
 Divertimenti sells similar ceiling racks, from £30; and baskets, from £48

LESSONS LEARNT *'Owning an old house like this is really like being a caretaker – when you think you've finished fixing and painting, it's time to start over. We give the garden walls a fresh coat of paint at the beginning of every summer – by winter they are crumbling again'*

decorative details, such as the kitchen's tongue-and-groove doors. They also worked with him to select the natural pigment for some of the paint finishes, which give a special, washed-out look. 'The developer was still doing work on the house until the day we moved in,' says Andrew.

As well as buying a slice of Portuguese history, the pair were lucky that the developer working on the house made the classic mistake – he'd fallen in love with his project. 'That's one of the reasons this house is so special,' says Andrew. 'The Santa Catarina terracotta floor tiles throughout the ground floor are made locally, and each one is cut by

hand. They already look as if they have been here as long as the house itself.'

Andrew and Rupert spent their first winter adding their own finishing touches, such as lime-washing pine ceiling beams, and working out how their furniture would fit into the house. 'We bought a few new pieces, many of them modern,' says Andrew. 'The bright colours and contemporary shapes work really well in this old house because its walls and floors are so simple.'

Part of the plan for new life in the sun involved using their skills to run a B&B with a difference, with former caterer Rupert running cookery workshops for guests in the

large, open kitchen. Andrew has been able to indulge his love of gardening, creating a slice of Portuguese paradise in the terraced space at the back of the house. 'It's still a work in progress, as all gardeners tend to say,' he laughs. 'But we now have oranges, lemons, tomatoes, olives, almonds, apricots, figs, peaches, cherries – and every herb you can think of – it's great for stocking up the larder.'

The couple still have family they visit in the UK, but Portugal is now home. 'There's a Portuguese word, *saudade*, which means longing and nostalgia,' says Andrew. 'We used to long to live here full time and now we do – in a house that we love.' 25



UPSTAIRS GUEST BEDROOM
Tangerine accessories add a contemporary splash of colour against the dark furniture and white walls. Similar orange lampshade, £29, Imperial Lighting

MASTER BEDROOM
The double doors are a traditional feature, while luxurious bedlinen lends a boutique hotel feel. The chenille throw, £69, Marks & Spencer, has the same look



GUEST BEDROOM
All-white walls and a lime-washed ceiling provide a simple backdrop for a 19th-century French bed. The Provençal Sassy white French bed, from £1,345, The French Bed Company, would work well in a room like this. For details of Andrew and Rupert's B&B, visit casarosada-algarve.com



GUEST BATHROOM
'The tiles were put in by the developer, and luckily we really like them,' says Andrew. For a similar look try the Regency basin and pedestal, £139, Victoria Plumb







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DINING AREA
 'All the floors were originally different colours, so we painted them in one shade,' says Catey. Floor painted in Oak Apple eggshell, £50 for 2.5 litres, Fired Earth. Reclaimed Pine Farmhouse Tables can make a similar design, price on request



INSPIRING

HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY

Detached 1930s former bungalow with a modern extension

LOCATION East Sussex

ROOMS Hall, sitting/dining room, kitchen, four bedrooms, two bathrooms (one en suite)

PURCHASED 2007

PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'The last house we bought was in London,' says Catey.

A SHORE THING

Catey and Dan Hillier were inspired by nature and this seaside location to create an idyllic weekend home

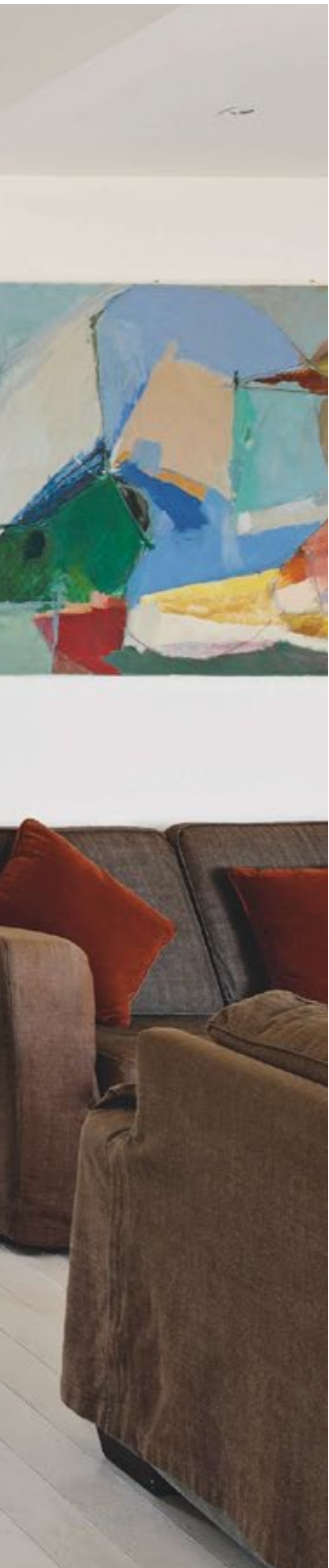
FEATURE SALLY MATON | PHOTOGRAPHY BRUCE HEMMING

Catey and Dan Hillier were looking for a second home outside London where they could enjoy weekends and summer holidays with sons George, 8, and Lloyd, 5. As Catey hails from South Wales, the couple originally thought of buying a derelict cottage in the Brecon Beacons and doing it up. But as Catey recalls, 'I spent a long time whizzing up and down the M4 and often got stuck in traffic. Realistically,

I thought this is not going to work for us, so we started to look for somewhere closer to London.'

Catey found a website that gave commuting times from the capital. 'I saw that parts of the south coast were nearer and quicker to get to. We searched the area until we saw this property in East Sussex. The surroundings were beautiful and we could see the house's potential.'

Set on a shingle spit, the building stands on a road parallel to the sea wall. Originally a 1930s



HALL

Catey has included an eclectic mix of furniture, such as the Art Deco lampstand and vintage French bottle tree.

Chest painted in Marine Blue 95 traditional oil eggshell, £27 for 1 litre, Little Greene



SITTING AREA

Abstract patterns and 1950s-style furniture give this room a retro feel.

For a similar woodburner try the Westfire 15, from £1,507, Stoves Online



KITCHEN

A metal cupboard and bright silicone utensils provide splashes of colour.

ESE Direct sells metal storage cabinets, from £249 each. Stainless steel workbench, from £266, Dentons Catering Equipment



GUEST BEDROOM

From the balcony there are uninterrupted views for miles over the shingle garden and out to sea.

Chair painted in St Giles Blue full gloss, £21 for 750ml, Farrow & Ball. For a similar rug try Oceans OCE 03, from £125, Rugs Direct. British wool Skye mauve check throw, £59, The Sofa Throw Company, is a good alternative



GUEST BEDROOM

‘Painting the furniture the same colour as the walls makes the room look restful,’ says Catey.

Ikea’s Matilda curtains, £15 per pair, and Racka pole, £2, are comparable. Try eBay for a 1950s cotton blanket or a Lloyd Loom basket. To rent the house, go to sawdays.co.uk/britain/england/sussex/curlews



BATHROOM

Blocks of turquoise bring this otherwise plain scheme to life.

Amhurst natural cork bath mat, £15, Habitat.

Wire paper bin, from £49, RoyalDesign.co.uk, would also look good

worker’s cottage, it has been extended over the years. ‘The interior was a mishmash of colours and was tired looking,’ recalls Catey. Some of the initial work involved repairs. ‘We insulated the loft, added pipework and updated the central heating. In the sitting room we mended a leaking pipe that had saturated the chipboard under the oak floorboards, which all had to be replaced.’

With the work completed, the couple set about choosing colours. ‘My starting point was using a deep blue to paint the chest in the hall,’ explains Catey. ‘With that as my reference, the palette fell into place with bleached-wood greys,

warm tones from the pebbles and greens and turquoise from the sea and marsh.’

The couple went for a more contemporary industrial feel in the kitchen. ‘I liked the look of stainless steel workbenches used in the catering trade,’ says Catey. ‘The first one worked so well that I had another one custom-made.’ Dry goods are stored in the old metal cupboard, which was a junk-shop find painted by Catey.

Now that they’ve settled in, Catey adds, ‘We love it here – we can ride our bikes, go to the beach, even swim in winter in wetsuits. It’s our escape, in a special and lovely part of England.’ 25

DECORATING TIP
‘If you’re stuck for ideas, start by painting everything white and then build up layers of colour. It worked really well here’

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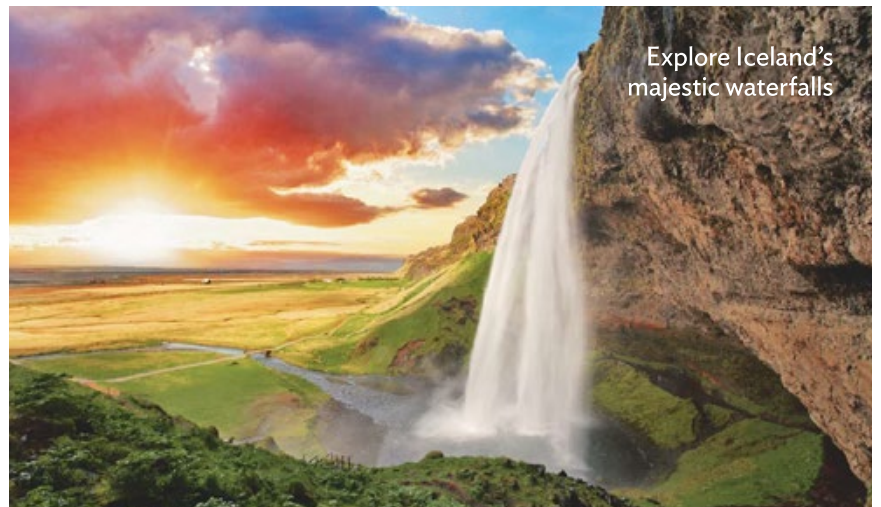
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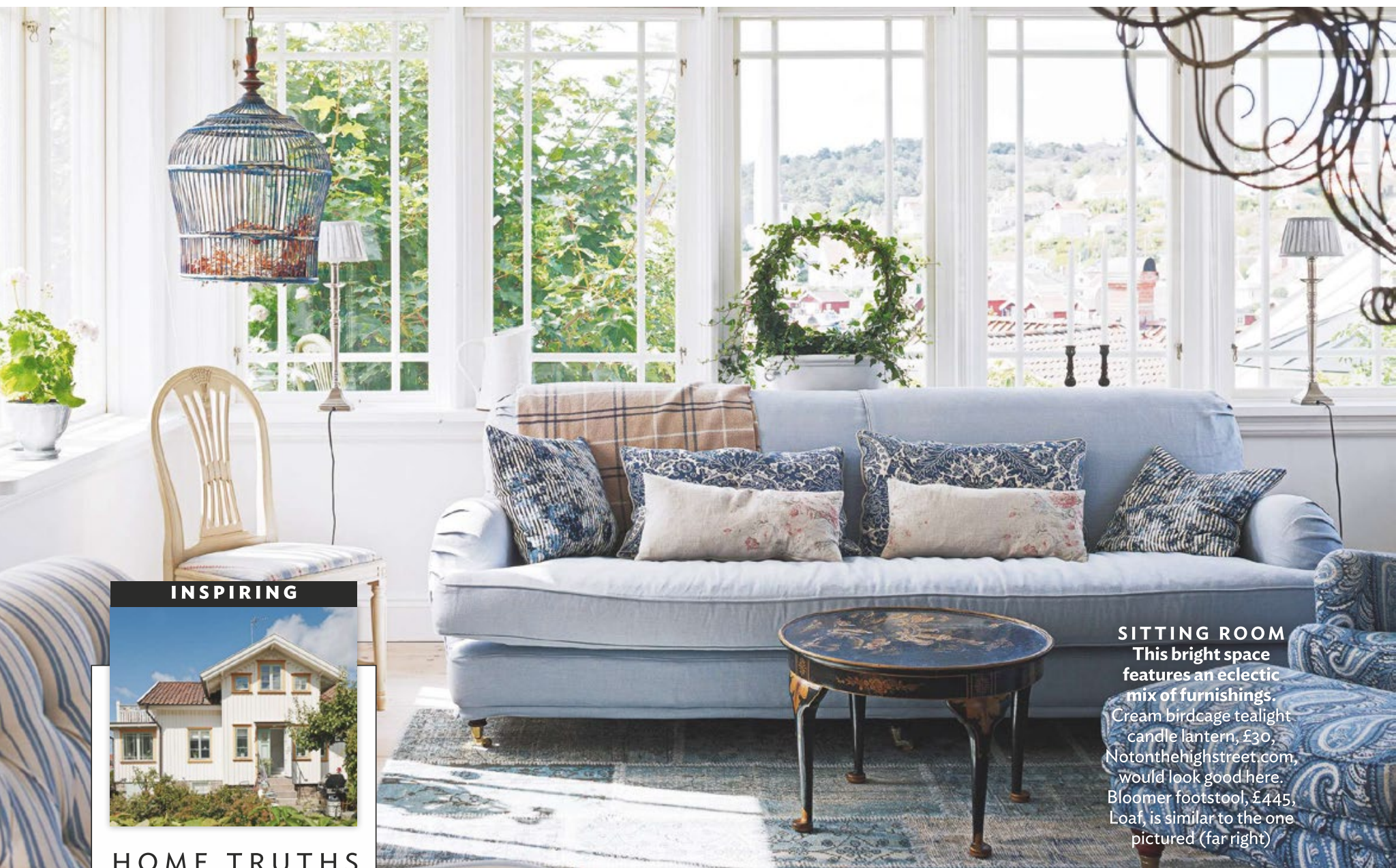


A soft blue-and-white palette with subtle nods to its maritime setting make this a relaxing home for Marie Sahlin and her family



RETREAT TO THE COAST

FEATURE JENNY COAD | PHOTOGRAPHY GAP INTERIORS



INSPIRING



HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY

Fisherman's cottage, built around 1890

LOCATION Sweden

ROOMS Hall, sitting room, kitchen-diner, three bedrooms, two bathrooms, boathouse

PURCHASED 2010

PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'We also have a home near Marbella,' says Marie.

SITTING ROOM

This bright space features an eclectic mix of furnishings. Cream birdcage tealight candle lantern, £30, Notonthehighstreet.com, would look good here. Bloomer footstool, £445, Loaf, is similar to the one pictured (far right)

Growing up in a house where the walls were painted almost as often as the sheets were changed, it's no wonder Marie Sahlin developed a taste for decoration. Her father ran a store selling

carpets, wallpapers and paint and, at the weekends, would help spruce up her bedroom. 'My mother was constantly updating the interiors in our home, so for me it's completely normal to repaint the sitting room on a Friday evening,'

says Marie, 'though my husband Marcus disagrees with me.'

Marie works in fashion, which might explain her desire for an ever-evolving backdrop. 'We recently refreshed the house using white and light blue,' she says. The pace of transformation



HALL

Beautiful Moroccan-style tiles make a striking impression on first-time visitors. Leksand tiles, £107sq m, Marrakech Design. Blind in Ralph Lauren Mapleton Floral Blue fabric, £124m, Designers Guild

FAVOURITE SPOT *'I love to drink my coffee outside on the steps in the morning sun – it's the most peaceful time of the day'*



HALL

White woodwork and pale-painted furniture keeps the look fresh. Jean-Pierre chest of drawers, £695, Graham and Green, is a good match





DINING AREA
 Striped fabrics add a nautical feel.
 Ralph Lauren Morgan Stripe Sky wallpaper,
 £97 per 10m roll, Select Wallpaper. Zola
 table, £695, Loaf, is similarly rustic

LAST WORD *'When choosing furnishings, follow your instincts. Go for bold designs and don't be worried about mixing patterns – provided they're in a similar style'*



KITCHEN
 Units painted in a subtle blue shade complement
 Marie's collection of vintage china.
 Cabinets in Pearl Ashes eggshell; walls in Bone White eggshell,
 both £50 for 2.5 litres, Fired Earth. For similar lights try Lyre double
 pendants with French ceramic shade, £250, Broughtons

may have been frenetic but the effect is restful, cool and calm, reflecting the serene location on Sweden's Bohuslän coast. Marie grew up 45 minutes inland from here and has long had an affinity with the area. It was this, and the beauty of the place, which encouraged the couple to buy a home here for them and their teenage sons, Ludvig and Philip.

The house they found is in a pretty fishing village made up of

traditional red wooden houses, which form a colourful and creative setting. Though there is a nod to the property's nautical location in the fresh scheme, Decor-wise, Marie says she was keen to avoid peddling a seafaring cliché, opting instead for a 'romantic seaside' theme. 'I went for a softer blue rather than the classic marine hue,' she says.

Their cottage also has an eclectic feel thanks to the many

interesting antiques, including a coffee table bought at auction and an elegant gold sofa that came from an antiques shop in Palma, Mallorca. 'I'm addicted to auctions,' confesses Marie. But comfort rules. Take the sitting room sofa, which Marie had custom-made with one seat cushion, and the generous dining table, which was created using timber from a dock in northern Spain. 'It's the best table ever,'

says Marie. 'I can place warm pots and pans on it – even put a knife in it – and it still looks amazing.'

That lived-in ethos suits the age of the house. The couple were keen to preserve its character and make a virtue of features such as the old timber wall in the kitchen, which they have kept on show. The result is a beautifully aesthetic home, but one in which you can hunker down and put your feet up. ²⁵



BEDROOM

With its low pitched ceiling, this space has a cosy feel emphasised by decorative cream-and-red wallpaper.

Pavilions and Parasols wallpaper, £75 per roll, Sanderson.

Blinds and cushion in Ralph Lauren Ice House Stripe Barn, £107m, Designers Guild. Camille rattan armchair, £165, Tikamoon, is comparable



BATHROOM

Navy and white tiles laid in a diamond pattern add interest to this plain scheme.

Grosvenor Border, £3.83 per tile, Topps Tiles, would create a similar look. Ocean wall-mounted basin, £99, Victoria Plumb, is an attractive alternative



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DINING AREA
Jessica bought the Chinese Chippendale chairs second-hand, then painted and re-covered them. Ticking fabric for tablecloth, £22m, Ian Mankin. Spots print, from £2,100, Damien Hirst

Out of the BLUE

Globetrotter Jessica Buckley created a colourful home for her exotic souvenirs

FEATURE ALISON GIBB | PHOTOGRAPHY DOUGLAS GIBB



DISTINCTIVE

HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY

Georgian apartment

LOCATION Edinburgh

ROOMS Sitting room, kitchen, cloakroom, two bedrooms (one en suite)

PURCHASED 2011

PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'I lived in Sydney for a year, studying interior design,' says Jessica.



2



SITTING ROOM

The framed embroidered tribal textile above the fireplace was a gift from an Uzbek trader.

Spectrum rug, The Rug Company, £1,235sq m.

White silk curtain fabric, £25m, Henry Bertrand

1 HALL

The skirt tablecloth cleverly hides all the telephone and internet connections.

Walls painted in Rectory Red estate emulsion, £38 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball

2 KITCHEN

Honed slate quarry tiles have been cut and laid in a herringbone pattern.

Misia blind fabric, £100m, Manuel Canovas.
Sconce wall lights, £141 each, Vaughan

Her adventurous spirit took Jessica Buckley to some far-flung places before she finally bought an apartment in Edinburgh's New Town. 'I travelled the world and lived in Kazakhstan for several years,' she says. 'Then, while in Sydney, I trained in interior design.'

Her experience in Australia had a huge influence on Jessica. 'Designers out there are

heavily led by America – they think big in terms of colour and style, embracing everything from the preppy look to Hollywood vintage,' she says. 'My visual language and vocabulary matured while I was there and I returned to Scotland with an ability to make bold choices and the confidence that they would work.'

Jessica does not play safe, but her look is classic, mixed with a knowledge of what works in a period home. 'My favourite designer



is Nina Campbell, a real traditionalist,' she says. 'I loved her work in the 1980s, when it was all frills and swags, and her style has evolved brilliantly – it's more contemporary now, of course, but still feminine and luxurious. Comfort is really important in interiors – a home should be welcoming, easy to live in and sociable.' Jessica's flat took three years to complete, but for the first year she just lived in it to see how it felt. 'I didn't touch it for

a while, as I wanted to get to know the light and how it falls in the various rooms. I decided to bring the kitchen to the front, as I use it as a second sitting room really and the front is south facing and sunny all day. Both bedrooms are at the back now, which made sense to me.'

Having thought about it for a year, she did the renovations all in one go, moving out for a while during the messiest moments. The result is a glamorous and feminine living

DESIGN TIP
'Don't be afraid of colour. White walls can seem like a safe option, but painting them can really lift a home'



1



2



GUEST BEDROOM

This space has a dramatic flair, but is still a cosy retreat for visitors.

Walls painted in Polka Dot claypaint, £29 for 2.5 litres, Earthborn. Canopy fabrics, Beauregard, £150m, Manuel Canovas, lined with Samos, £114m, Vaughan

space. Her partner, James MacDougall, has moved in since, but he likes her ideas. 'He says he has no objections to the pink kitchen,' says Jessica. 'And in fact, the only alterations James required were a Nespresso machine and a drinks bar, both brilliant additions.'

Colour, applied by an expert hand in this apartment, is crucial, says Jessica. 'Georgian Edinburgh can be quite grey,' she points out, 'so I used a lot of white to sharpen the appearance of the various tones.' Lighting has been given

careful consideration, too. 'Many of the lampshades are lined with gold card, which gives the apartment a lovely warm glow in the evening,' says Jessica. A mixture of extravagant fabrics and wallpapers, cleverly updated inherited furniture, Jessica's designer touch and few bargain finds have combined to make this apartment a beautiful home.

'We're really happy here,' she smiles. 'A shop and a country bolthole would make our life truly complete, I guess, but no hurry!' 25

1 MASTER BEDROOM

Jessica designed and made the bed, and upholstered it in pink ticking.

Mural, from £1,250, Jess Arthur. Try Counting Lambs for an eiderdown like this one, from £850

2 EN SUITE

The beautiful shower curtain has a waterproof lining for practicality.

Shower curtain fabric, Magnolia, £89m, GP&J Baker. Metro wall tiles, £12sq m, Walls and Floors

INSIGHT

Decorating with contrasting colours

Uplifted by Jessica Buckley's vibrant scheme? Introduce some bright hues to your interior as she has done



It's tempting to play it safe when it comes to injecting colour into your home, but interiors that experiment with bold tones are often the most striking. The key is to do your research, testing contrasting palettes out before decorating, and using colour and fabric with confidence.

IN THE MOOD

Colour can have a profound effect on state of mind, and a lively scheme like Jessica's can uplift the senses as well as add depth. Unexpected combinations, such as blues and reds or oranges and pinks, can work well but try to provide relief with neutral touches, like white woodwork, as Jessica has done, or introducing pattern to break up the look and add texture. Before decorating walls, paint the inside of a shoebox with your chosen hue. That way, you'll see how the light falls into the corners, too, which will give a truer representation of how the shade will look in a room. If you prefer to keep walls neutral, a rug is a great way to inject vibrancy, complemented by bright accessories such as cushions and throws.

PROFESSIONAL ADVICE...



● 'Consider space vertically and horizontally. Then highlight different planes through wall colours and framed pieces. Good quality, bright artwork breaks monotony and offers inspiration.'

● Build tones gradually rather than all in one go. Objects must find their own space within a house and it's the same with colour. It's important to

experience the space for a while until you decide how to decorate.

● Block colour can form the basis of accessories, then add pattern on top like chevrons, stripes and optical illusions. It's also interesting to form clusters of colour. I love having an area featuring pillows, exotic rugs from Peru and bold throws that overlap each other.

● The right lighting complements a colourful interior as it can highlight or block areas accordingly. You can make a naturally dark environment light or a bright environment very dramatic.'

CRISTIAN ZUZUNAGA, ZUZUNAGA

HARMONIOUS LOOK

A colourful scheme will benefit from a sense of unity to prevent it from looking disparate. So think about creating a decorative flow from room to room, by picking up similar accents throughout. While each room might contain a different palette, a base colour or pattern, such as a white geometric featured in rugs or cushions, will tie the look together. Follow-

through is also important. If you're opting for a rich tone, like the bright blue in Jessica's sitting room, pick the hue up in furnishings and ceramics as she has done. Introducing a contrasting colour can be effective, but stick to a maximum of two or three strong shades per scheme. Balance bright colours and graphic pattern with soft neutrals for a relaxed look.

EXPERT EYE

'Adding colour to a room can change the look and feel. Vibrant shades will create an uplifting mood whereas cool hues and soft blushes will bring a calming ambience. Always include a surprise, whether it's a feature wall, a large rug or a bright sofa; it's a great way to introduce a focal point.'

MICHAEL CURTIS GREEN, MAHOUT LIFESTYLE

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● FARROW & BALL: LIVING WITH COLOUR by Ros Byam Shaw, farrow-ball.com

A useful book showing how colour can be used to create atmosphere and character.



DISTINCTIVE

HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY Grade II listed priory, with origins dating back to the 6th century

LOCATION West Sussex

ROOMS Hall, sitting room, dining room, kitchen, day room, study, cloakroom, playroom, seven bedrooms, six bathrooms

PURCHASED 2009

PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'We lived in a Victorian terraced house in Fulham,' says Adam.



IN WITH THE NEW

Adam and Lou Black helped breathe new life into a medieval priory, creating a vibrant family home

FEATURE KATHY HURST | **PHOTOGRAPHY** BRETT CHARLES

Step inside Adam and Lou Black's medieval home – with its oak panelling, stone-mullioned windows and fireplaces – and you're met with a bright, airy interior accessorised with quirky, offbeat finds. 'When we bought the house, it was a little foreboding, with small windows and dark wood everywhere,' says Adam. 'We wanted to preserve its history while making it inviting.' The priory's history is rich: some of the brickwork dates back to the 6th century; the date 1439 is carved into the fireplace in the oak-beamed sitting room, and there are tales of underground passages linking the house to a church 200 yards away.

While previous owners had modernised the house, the Blacks were keen to create a more family-friendly space for themselves and their four children, Bruno, 12, Noah, 11, Tibo, 8, and Gabriel, 7. A number of internal doors were removed, giving the kitchen a greater sense of connection to the rest of the house. Dark floorboards and panelling were brightened with a few coats of

white paint and the couple chose a delicate, chalky shade for the wooden kitchen cabinets. 'The original beams and panelling were left untouched, but painting the heavy oak woodwork in a lighter shade has really lifted the interior,' says Adam.

Although he runs bedroom furniture firm Button & Sprung, Adam is the first to admit that the interior design is Lou's domain. 'I like to think I have a sense of style, but Lou has very distinctive taste,' he says. Little vignettes – from the clusters of lanterns and candlesticks on mantelpieces to an artfully arranged collection of glass demijohns on a mirrored console table – gesture to Lou's eye for detail. Elegant chandeliers sit alongside industrial light fittings with quirky coloured flexes while mismatched pendants complement a vintage-style zinc-topped kitchen table. 'There's no rule book, but somehow it all works,' laughs Adam.

The house continually evolves as Lou incorporates new finds. On each side of the stone fireplace in the day room are rustic French

FAVOURITE FEATURE *'The location of the house is fantastic – from our bedroom window, there's a wonderful view of the sea'*



SITTING ROOM

This is located in one of the oldest parts of the house, the couple left the beams and panelling untouched.

Sofa upholstered in Vanilla Ombrione fabric, £72m, Designers Guild. Klippan two-seater sofa, £180, Ikea. Nevada corner group sofa, £3,887, Multiyork, is a match



DINING ROOM

'This has become a real party room – the disco balls are very Lou,' says Adam.

Bespoke dining table painted in Al Fresco intelligent eggshell, £53 for 2.5 litres, Little Greene. Mirror/balls, from £485 each, Terralec. Walls painted in Wimborne White modern emulsion, £42 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball



KITCHEN

The kitchen was already in situ, but has been updated by painting the cabinetry. Extra-large Daddy zinc kitchen table is similar, £695, Loaf



DAY ROOM

Filling the cavity with logs and accentuating with architectural salvage items adds interest to this unused fireplace. Salvo Web sells antique stone balusters like these, price on application



STUDY

'This is one of my favourite rooms – a real, grown-up boys' space,' says Adam. For a vintage vaulting horse, from £1,100, try Salvo Web. Holly three-seater sofa, from £910, Sofa.com, is similar

shutters, bought for a song at a reclamation yard. She also persuaded Adam to replace the traditional oak dining table with a contemporary purple version that she paired with mismatched chairs, some found in skips. 'I was initially unsure about the colour of the table but it looks great,' says Adam. It is in the design of the bedrooms, furnished with upholstered beds and luxurious linens, that Adam's expertise is evident: simple button-backed headboards are paired with colourful cushions and throws. 'We went all-out in the master bedroom, which is one of the most beautiful spots in the house – with

gorgeous morning sunlight and a view of the sea,' says Adam. 'The feel here is quite classic and inspired by the vintage floral fabric that Lou sourced for the upholstery.'

The priory is now an idyllic place for Adam and Lou to bring up their four young boys. 'In the summer, we'll open up the doors so the children can play out in the gardens, or we'll entertain our family and friends over a meal and a few glasses of wine,' says Adam. 'We're merely the custodians of this wonderful historic building, but it's very much our home.' 25



MASTER BATHROOM
Lou added character with offbeat accessories. Polperro slipper bath, £895, Cast Iron Bath Company. Shutter, £145, Amy Perry



GUEST BEDROOM
A decorative mirror, painted furniture and salvaged shutters give the space a laid-back, French feel. Camelia divan, from £995 for a double, Button & Sprung. Artichoke duvet cover, £50 for a double, Secret Linen Store. Notonthehighstreet.com sells wood candlesticks, from £18 each



MASTER BEDROOM
'In the morning, we watch the sun rise and in the evening we'll often light the open fire,' says Adam. Samphire superking divan, £1,075, Button & Sprung. Relaxed denim pink duvet cover, £60, Secret Linen Store

DESIGN DESTINATIONS

Celebrate the best of British art and architecture with these great breaks



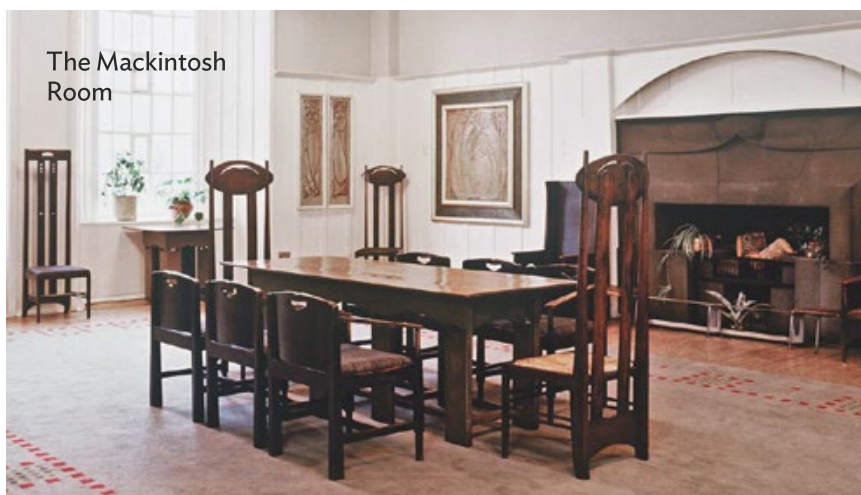
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78 Derngate designed by Mackintosh

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KITCHEN

With its cream painted units and traditional range cooker, the kitchen has a bright, rustic appeal.

For authentic handmade Sussex trugs, from £28.80, try Trug Makers. John Lewis sells Le Creuset kettles from £72

PALE & INTERESTING

The 1930s style of Anne and Richard Wells' home lends itself beautifully to cool Scandi-themed decor

FEATURE PAT GARRATT | PHOTOGRAPHY DAVID GILES

When Anne and Richard Wells decided to move house, it was mainly to gain off-street parking and more outdoor space. Luckily, they had found a modest semi, close to all the facilities they needed, but with the advantage of a garage, driveway and long back garden.

The previous owners, who were elderly, had left behind a house in need of a complete refurbishment. 'In the sitting room there was a horrid brick wall, which we replaced, and black ceiling beams that we plaster-boarded

over,' recalls Anne. The kitchen was tiny, the bathroom suite was avocado, the whole place needed rewiring and replumbing and all of the ceilings had to be replaced. Crucially, though, there was space outside to extend and create a fourth bedroom upstairs, a larger kitchen, utility, cloakroom, conservatory and bigger garage downstairs.

Because the children, Emily, 25, Florence, 21, and Charles, 17, were still young at the time, the couple decided to delay moving in until all the major rebuilding was complete, and luckily were able to stay with Richard's

parents while the work was taking place. 'It was quite hard in those days to get planning permission, and in retrospect I wish we had gone for a bigger extension,' says Anne. 'But with three children under seven, we wanted to get into our home as quickly as possible.'

An architect friend drew up the plans and local builders were employed to carry out the work. 'The design was extremely sympathetic to the age of the house,' Anne continues. 'We had traditional, wooden sash windows installed, used new bricks that were as close as possible to the colour of the old

REPLANNED



HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY Semi-detached home built in the 1930s

LOCATION Hertfordshire

ROOMS Hall, sitting room, kitchen, utility, conservatory/dining room, study, cloakroom, four bedrooms, bathroom

PURCHASED 1996

PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'We lived in a three-bedroom Victorian semi not far from here,' says Anne.

CONSERVATORY

This is the room the family spend the most time in, and can be used in all weathers.

Walls painted in Swedish White paint mixing matt, £24.49 for 2.5 litres, by Dulux. Chairs painted in Green Ground estate eggshell, £53 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball. Floral bouquets, price on application, Betty and Bear. The no. 27 wire chandelier, from £235, by Raymentwire is similar to this

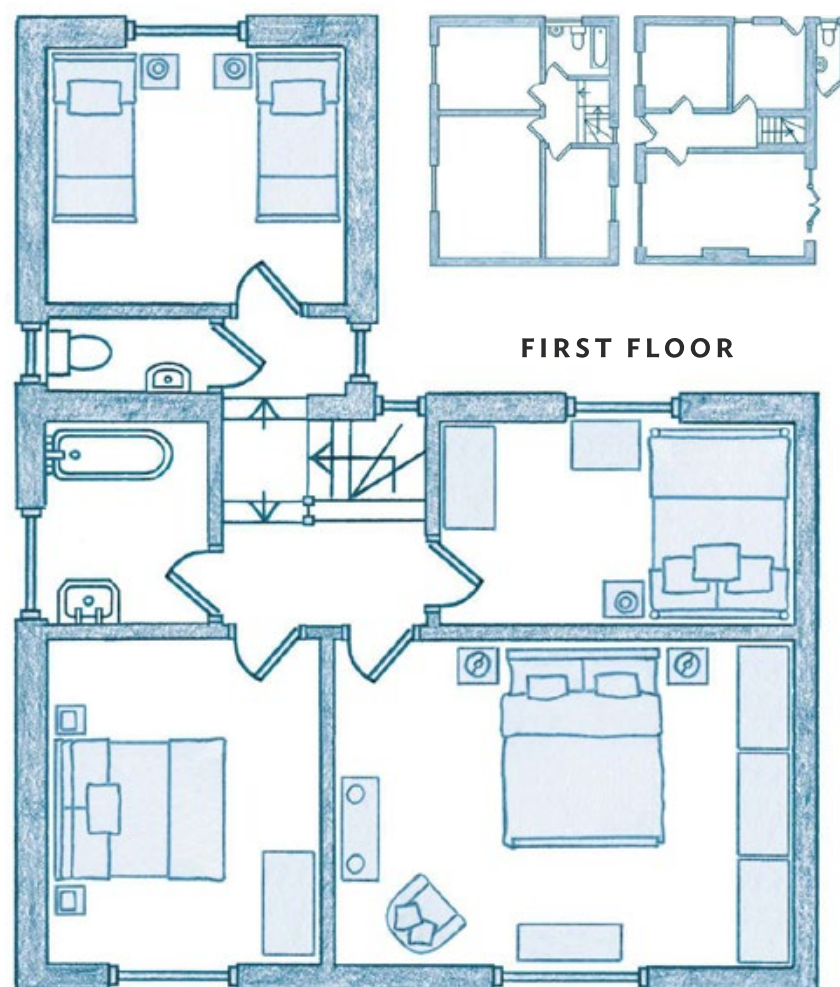
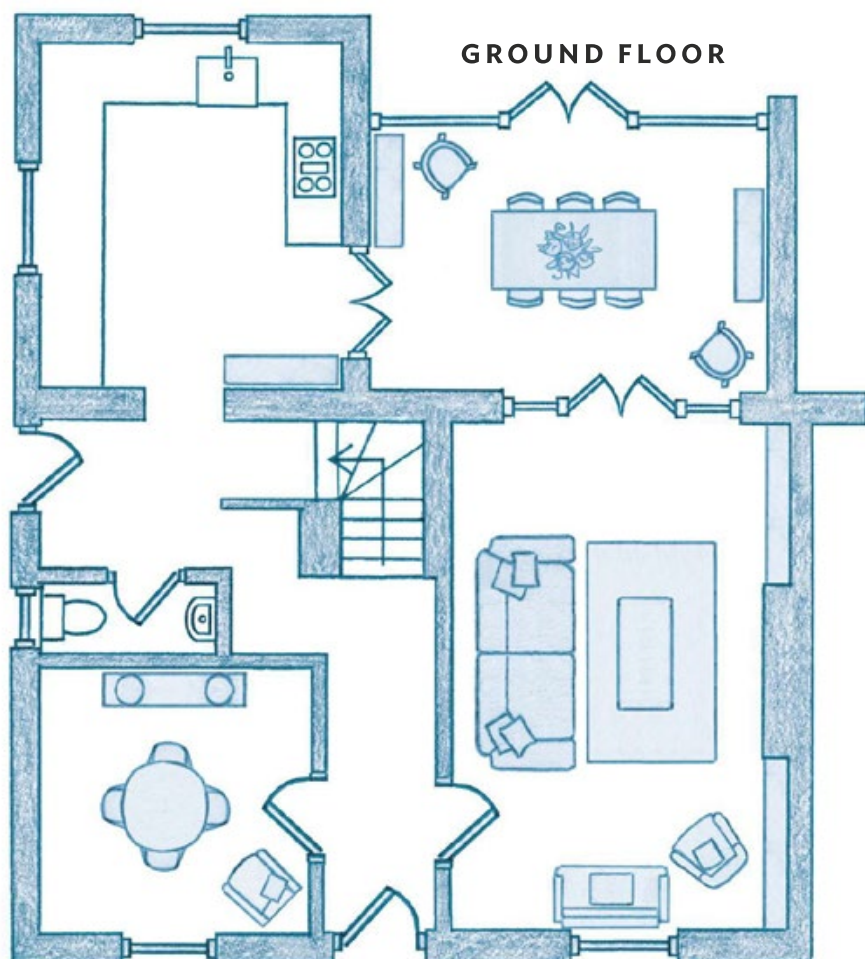
DECORATING TIP 'If you love a pale interior but are worried that the result could look too cold, add a splash of colour in the form of flowers or cushions'



SITTING ROOM
Anne redesigned the former brick fireplace and uses it to display two old ginger jars, which are family heirlooms. Super Rugs sells Hamadan rugs like this from £288. Try the Duck Egg Christobel linen, £59m by Kate Forman for a similar floral striped upholstery fabric

AFTER

BEFORE





GAZEBO
Used as an outdoor dining room, the gazebo is both practical and stylish. Try Gazebo.co.uk for similar



MASTER BEDROOM
‘Busy wallpaper can work really well in a small room,’ says Anne. Antique Rose Bouquet wallpaper, £25 a roll, Cath Kidston. The Brusali bedside table, £30 from Ikea, is similar



BATHROOM
The white bathroom fittings contrast well with the pale blue wallpaper. Josette white/dove grey damask wallpaper, £33 per roll, Laura Ashley, is similar. The No.5 Gothic table, £295 by Raymentwire, would suit this scheme

building, and kept to the half-rendered style of the original.’ Where possible, the existing 1930s features like picture rails and panelled doors were retained but, where these were damaged, Richard would hunt down suitable original replacements in local salvage yards.

It took another 18 months after the family moved in for the conservatory to be built, but it was worth the wait. ‘We use it every day and, in warm weather, it provides access to a gazebo where we spend all our summers,’ says Anne.

Over the years, her style has evolved, but today she has opted for a cool Scandi-inspired look with pops of bright colour contrasting with the predominantly pale walls, while furniture is a mix of old and new.

Despite regretting not having a larger extension all those years ago, Anne loves her home. ‘It lends itself to every time of year,’ she says. ‘I change the flowers to suit the seasons and with the log fire going in winter, it’s cosy. I never tire of decorating and changing it.’ 25



GUEST ROOM
A white-painted, iron bedstead is the perfect foil for Anne’s collection of family patchwork. Find similar patchwork quilts, from £60, Notonthehighstreet.com. The Birlea Atlas metal bed frame, from £131 by Bedworld, would look good here



SUMMER HOUSE
‘I use this space all year round,’ says Anne. Try Garden Buildings Direct for a similar model, from £195. The Red and Rainbow Square Jewels Throw is a similar crocheted blanket, £90 from Cumbrian Country Crafts

THE SOURCE

Erica Miller shows how you can achieve the style secrets seen in this issue's homes

DESIGN IDEAS



SWEDISH STRIPES PAGES 98 – 101

Typically Nordic in style, clean and simple roll-up blinds in vertical stripes make the right impression in the Sahlins' dining room. Teamed with crisp blue-and-white striped wallpaper, upholstered banquette seating and rustic wooden furniture, this fresh, cool look is one that's easy to live with. An abundance of natural daylight, pale floorboards and white-painted timber ensure that the overall scheme is bright and airy. Used sparingly, the red in the blind fabric and cushion works perfectly as an accent colour.



PAINTED CUPBOARD PAGES 21 – 26

Carefully thought-out storage is a vital part of any home. It helps your household run efficiently, and is a good investment when you come to sell your property. Steven Gambrel and his partner Chris Conner have made great use of an otherwise dead space at the end of a corridor by fitting tailor-made cupboards to fill the space. To create a unique design feature, the drawers have been handpainted in a smart two-tone blue finish. Chicken wire panels have been fitted to the doors and the wardrobe interior has been painted a contrasting shade of red. For a seamless, integrated look the rest of the joinery has been painted in the same light tone as the walls.



SHELVING IDEA PAGES 28 – 32

Unusual and imaginative, the Clintons have installed a bespoke shelving unit in their sitting room. It offers a clever combination of storage cupboards, shelves and display areas. Within this unit they've created a dedicated place to show off favourite ornaments. To make it a little out of the ordinary, they've incorporated a couple of wall-hung boxes positioned within the frame of the cabinet. The neutral tone of the furniture matches the colour of the walls, which helps the unit blend into the background and allows the eye to focus on the chosen objects on display. Shelving like this can be custom-made to fit a space, making the most of every inch, or there are many modular options available, which come in prices to suit all budgets.



KITCHEN STYLES

A new kitchen represents a significant financial outlay, so it's important to choose the right finish for your cabinets and create a scheme that will look good for many years to come. We explore the three main options available – painted, wood and gloss.



HI-GLOSS CABINETS PAGES 123 – 125

Lacquered cabinetry is perfect for creating an ultra-modern look. Lila Blount has teamed sleek two-tone units in cream and navy to create a smart feel in her spacious kitchen. Reflective surfaces like this are ideal for maximising the light

in a kitchen. Hi-gloss cabinets come in a wide range of colour choices, and they're generally considered to be more hard-wearing than other paint finishes. However, shiny cupboards can tend to show up fingerprints and grease residue, particularly if they're dark in tone. The Taos white kitchen, seen below, is the epitome of minimalist chic. It features clean lines and lacquered cabinets that bounce light around the space, from £8,500, Caple.



SOLID-WOOD DESIGN PAGES 147 – 151

The Maine-Tuckers have invested in a solid-wood kitchen, perfect for the archetypal country kitchen look. Generously proportioned timber units give the impression that this classic room is built to last. Wood cabinets age



beautifully and most darken with the passage of time. Each piece of timber has its own character and beautiful variation through the unique grain. This custom-made design mixes rich solid-walnut cabinetry; beaten silver handles; sleek, granite worktops; and state-of-the-art appliances. Walnut and silver bespoke kitchen, from £40,000, Smallbone of Devizes.



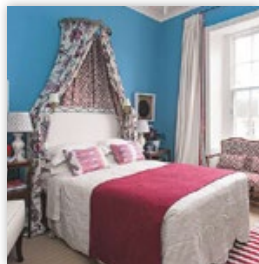
IN-FRAME PAINTED UNITS PAGES 42 – 47

Sharon Beggan and Declan McEvoy have opted for a painted in-frame kitchen with a run of neutral cupboards. Cabinets are nothing more than boxes, with a bottom, a back and two sides, and most are left at this, with a door attached.

A traditional in-frame kitchen differs in that it also has a front frame, which the door or drawer is set into, giving it a far stronger construction. An in-frame design is usually an indication of quality. Painted kitchens are ideal for those who prefer a homely feel. Although more expensive, a hand-painted finish gives a softer look. Another benefit of this style is that areas of damage can be touched up. The scheme pictured right has been designed around a range cooker, which creates a focal point at one end of the room. Units have been painted in a soft grey tone and wood floorboards add warmth. Suffolk bespoke in-frame painted kitchen, from £10,000, Neptune.



INSPIRED SHOPPING



HALF CORONA PAGES 103 – 106

A decorative half corona hung with elegant drapes adds distinction to Jessica Buckley's bedroom. For an equally graceful design try the Laurel half-tester bed canopy, £89, Oka.



BATHROOM LIGHTS PAGES 103 – 106

A pair of smart wall lights gives Jessica Buckley's bathroom a well-appointed look. To emulate this effect try the Chort wall light in polished nickel, from £295, Christopher Wray.



CUT GLASS PAGES 42 – 47

Cut glass creates an elegant display in Sharon Beggan and Declan McEvoy's sitting room. For similar pieces try the William Yeoward crystal Tara decanter, £580, Amara; Vera Wang Peplum crystal vase, £85, Wedgwood.



GLASS DINING TABLE PAGES 68 – 71

Millie McCallum and George MacNicol have opted for a striking and contemporary glass-topped table with white legs. For similar try the Morton trestle table, £249, Made.



WALL PANELS PAGES 109 – 112

A pair of old louvre doors creates an interesting feature in the Blacks' bathroom. For more decorative designs try these Stately screens, H180 x W39cm each, £395 for the pair; or Reims screen wall panel, H240 x W39cm, £299, both The French Bedroom Company.



DECORATIVE FLOOR TILES PAGES 98 – 101

If you like the beautiful patterned floor tiles in the Sahlins' hall, recreate the look with the GR4 or GR12 Moroccan encaustic tiles, £2.16 each, Best Tile.





SUMMERHOUSE

PAGES 114 – 117

If you covet a painted building similar to the one in the Wells' garden try the beautiful Baltimore summerhouse with slate-effect glass fibre roof, £4,850, Scotts of Thrapston.



5 OF THE BEST GARDEN SOFAS

Get set for lazy summer days and soak up the sun with our selection of the best looking and most practical garden sofas around.



Äpplaro/Hållö sofa, £328, Ikea



Honolulu sofa (plus table and two chairs), £999.99, Homebase



Bermuda medium rattan sofa, £749, Marks & Spencer



Lola grey rattan-effect corner garden sofa, £1,150, Tesco Direct



Ariel sofa, £525, John Lewis



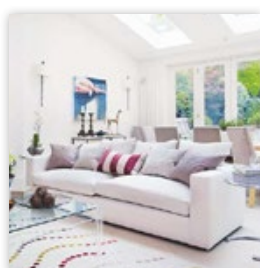
Royal Botania IXIT lounge bench in teak, £4,815, Encompass Furniture



PATTERNED BEDLINEN

PAGES 109 – 112

Pretty bedding in neutral tones strikes just the right note in the Blacks' guest bedroom. Try the Conran lace print bedding, £49.50 for a double duvet cover and two pillowcases, Marks & Spencer.



MODERN SOFA

PAGES 64 – 67

If you admire the contemporary sofas in the Assaels' home, copy this look with the Dillon large sofa in Buttermilk house brushed cotton, £1,499, Sofa Workshop.

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DINING AREA
Lila updated the look here by buying a large dining table and chairs in a charity shop and painting them to her taste.

Dining table painted in Evening Shadow; chairs in French Grey and Yellow Tan, all chalk paint, £19 per litre, Autentico



NEW-BUILD



HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY

1960s bungalow

LOCATION County Meath

ROOMS Hall, sitting room,

TV room, reading room,

kitchen-diner, study, exercise

room, three bedrooms

(two en suite), bathroom

PURCHASED 1999

PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'I lived in a semi in Dublin before moving here,' says Lila.

ART CLASS

Using her favourite paint shades and a new talent for upcycling, Lila Blount gave her bungalow a modern revamp

FEATURE & PHOTOGRAPHY BARBARA EGAN/REPORTAGE





KITCHEN

Lila's kitchen has been given a bright new look with light-coloured gloss and contrasting anthracite units.

High-gloss flat-pack kitchen, from £2,120, Cash & Carry Kitchens



STUDY

The dark mahogany furniture was repainted for a Scandi-inspired look. Desk and chair painted in Dolphin chalk paint, £19 per litre, Autentico



When Lila Blount first looked at her house in 1999, she was not impressed with the rather derelict feel. 'The garden was so overgrown that my husband Eamonn disappeared into the undergrowth for what seemed like an eternity,' she says. 'Then he reappeared and announced it was the perfect home.'

Having persuaded his wife that they should buy it, Eamonn then set to work on the challenging task of clearing the garden, which eventually

revealed a beautiful aspect. A large rear extension was also added and for well over a decade the house proved the perfect home for the couple.

About 15 years later, Lila decided the time had come to make some changes. Eamonn had sadly died a few years before, and Lila now felt ready to give the house a lighter feel, putting in a new kitchen in off-white hi-gloss with anthracite end units for contrast. She also installed bifold doors to take advantage of the newly renovated deck. But it was a fortuitous meeting with designer Ursula Winters that



DESIGN TIP 'If you find it hard to get started on a new look, pick one thing to kick it off. I began with the lime-washed floors. Once they were in, I could visualise a whole scheme starting to develop'

TV ROOM

'I began painting years ago, but never hung a single painting until I had this large blank wall to fill, and Ursula suggested getting these framed,' says Lila.

Karlstad sofa, £725, has the same style; Lilleröd rug, £110, both Ikea. Linum cushions, £35 each; Linum throw, £79, both Re-loved



READING ROOM

Lila has re-covered the furniture to brighten this windowless space.

Lime-washed laminate flooring, £18.50sq m, Wogans Dunleer. Angus Stripe in Flax, £39.50m, Ian Mankin, is a similar fabric

changed the course of Lila's renovation plans. 'I started by buying a sofa from her for the TV room, and then decided I needed new flooring,' explains Lila. 'Ursula recommended a lime-washed timber-effect floor. Then she suggested that I take a course in using chalk paints, and that gave the renovation a completely new direction.'

With her new-found skills, Lila began to update much of her old, dark furniture. 'I started by repainting a chair in the TV room in grey, upholstering it in a striking elephant print,' she says. 'Next, I bought

a table and four chairs from a charity shop and worked on those.' Lila then unearthed an old dresser from the garden shed and transformed it with a new colour. In the study, an old office desk, filing cabinets and a chair were given the same treatment for a more sophisticated look. 'I've updated the guest rooms, too, with simple blue gingham,' she says. 'The house seems so much brighter and more harmonious now.'

Lila's creative efforts have certainly paid off. 'I've given the interior a new lease of life,' she reflects, 'and learnt new skills in the process.' 25

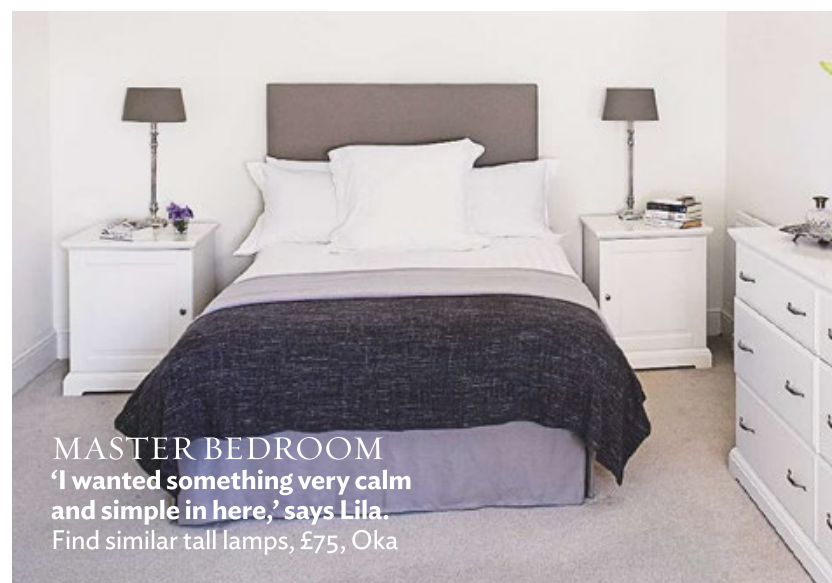
GUEST BEDROOM

Adding the gingham-covered headboard and valance instantly updated the look of this room.

Ikea sells navy gingham fabric, £8m. Star cushions, £28 each, Re-loved



FOR STOCKIST DETAILS GO TO PAGE 153



MASTER BEDROOM

'I wanted something very calm and simple in here,' says Lila.

Find similar tall lamps, £75, Oka

BATHROOM

Polished limestone tiles reflect light around the space.

For a similar-style counter-top basin try Victoria Plumb



SITTING ROOM

A combination of taupe and duck-egg blue creates a serene scheme.

John Sankey sofas, price on application, People Like Us. Lubéron rectangular coffee table, £189, Maisons du Monde, has the same look. For a rug like this one try the Braemar, from £295, John Lewis

NEW-BUILD



HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY

New-build cottage

LOCATION Hampshire

ROOMS Hall, sitting room, kitchen-diner, study, cloakroom, four bedrooms, bathroom

PURCHASED 2006

PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'Before moving here, we lived in a smaller property,' says Ali.

SPACE TO GROW

Ali and Steve Davies knew that with some structural alterations they could make their new home an ideal place to start a family

FEATURE VIVIENNE AYERS | PHOTOGRAPHY BRENT DARBY



KITCHEN

A spiral wine cellar gives this traditional-style scheme an interesting and unexpected twist.
Units, price on application, Thomas & Thomas.
Artisan stools, £234 each, John Lewis of Hungerford



For Ali and Steve Davies, the move to their Hampshire cottage was a conscious decision to return to their roots. 'The location was our priority,' says Ali. 'We both grew up here and our family and friends were nearby. We'd been living away because of work, but when we decided to start a family, we wanted to be near a good support network,' says Ali.

Having decided where they wanted to live, the couple began to search for a suitable property. 'I'd spotted this house online and wasn't too keen, but we decided to take a look anyway,' says Ali. 'I was pregnant with our first child, Ruby (now 9), and when we walked through the door, I knew it would make a wonderful family home.'

Once the pair had settled in, they started to put their mark on the place, which included a complete overhaul of the kitchen shortly before their youngest daughter Evie (now 6),



HALL

Black-and-white chequerboard tiles add shine to this bright area.
Walls and Floors' black-and-white porcelain tiles, £45sq m, are comparable. Country wooden sofa, £379, Scumble Goose

MASTER BEDROOM

Sand-coloured walls and dark-wood tones make this eaves area extra cosy. French Sleigh Beds sells similar mahogany designs, from £600. Sheepskin rug, £65, The White Company

was born. This involved joining the kitchen and dining room together to make a large open-plan space. 'We spent five months with nothing but a microwave and a sink,' recalls Ali. 'But we really wanted to design the room from scratch.' The couple also added a spiral wine cellar, which has become a real talking point. 'We couldn't get over how only three men could dig such a deep hole and install the cellar in just five days,' says Steve.

Once the kitchen-diner was finished, the next task was knocking a bathroom and en suite into one. 'For us, it's more practical to have one large family space,' says Ali. Further plans include attaching a boot room to the side of the house and creating a new utility area.

When it came to decorating, Ali has used complementary shades and styles so that each room links harmoniously. 'I enjoy making the cottage homely with beautiful upholstery, colour and personal touches,' she says.

With the transformation complete, the couple are glad they gave the house a second chance. 'We have a lovely family home,' says Ali, 'and we'll be staying put for a long time.' 25

FOR STOCKIST DETAILS GO TO PAGE 153

BATHROOM

The reconfigured room has created plenty of space for an elegant roll-top bath.

Versailles freestanding bath, £2,195; Battersea basin and pedestal, £495; Metro tiles, £75sq m, all Fired Earth. Polka dot hand towel, from £4.99, TK Maxx, is a good alternative

FAVOURITE SHOP 'We love browsing People Like Us soft furnishings in Winchester'



SITTING/DINING ROOM
 'The key to any scheme's success is how easily and comfortably you are able to interact with other people,' says Pablo. Armchair, around £3,000, George Smith. 606 Universal shelving system, price on application, Vitsoe. Reclaimed timber dining table by Fiorirà un Giardino at Summerill & Bishop, price on application



KITCHEN
 Shaker-style painted units suit the period of the house, while sleek Carrara marble surfaces add a modern touch. Southwold kitchen, price on application, Plain English. Cabinets painted in Lead III oil eggshell, £60 for 2.5 litres, Paint & Paper Library

OPEN HOUSE

Impressive windows and outdoor space drew Pablo and Rob to this airy period flat in the capital

FEATURE KAREN LESTER | **PHOTOGRAPHY** JODY STEWART



'From the outset, I was sure about what I wanted our new home to look like,' says Pablo Uribe. 'It had to have high ceilings, lots of light and a good configuration of rooms. For me, it wouldn't work without those fundamentals in place.'

The architect and interior designer has created a private residence for Calvin Klein as well as luxury homes all over the world. Together with his partner Rob, and their pug Rocco, he moved to west London when a new business interest meant they had to relocate. 'A few years ago, we started our frozen yogurt company, Snog, which has outlets all over town,' explains Pablo, 'so we needed a more central location.'

The search for the right property took several years, until they viewed two adjacent apartments in a sought-after area



INSPIRING



HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY

Edwardian apartment

LOCATION West London

ROOMS Sitting/dining room, kitchen, study, en-suite bedroom, dressing area

PURCHASED 2008

PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'Before moving here, we lived in a flat in Fulham,' says Pablo.

and immediately fell in love with one of them. 'One was far nicer than the other, but was beyond our price range,' says Pablo. 'We thought about how we could alter the more affordable flat, but it soon became clear that we could never achieve what we wanted, so we abandoned our plans.' The couple had a stroke of luck, however, when the flat came back on sale later that year, and a dip in the housing market meant that the price had fallen to within their budget. 'We put in an offer and it was accepted immediately,' says Pablo.

The property needed considerable work before the couple could move in. 'The 1930s configuration made the spaces rather dark, and we wanted to open them up to allow natural light to flood in,' says Pablo. 'Originally visitors would be met by a small entrance hall and bathroom as soon as they walked in; I knew the hallway had to be enlarged, and the bathroom walls needed to come down. The kitchen is now located in this new space so there are no underused areas.'

Their flat also boasts a small balcony, accessed from the sitting room, and a roof terrace. 'We cook and eat outside as much as we can,' says Pablo. For the interiors, he was keen to introduce a modern aesthetic with an earthy feel, with furniture in soft, neutral shades set against a simple backdrop.

'Moving here has provided the best solution to our location problem,' says Pablo. 'The flat isn't huge, but it's so well-planned out that it makes it very comfortable to live here.' 25

FAVOURITE FEATURE

'Plenty of natural light now fills the apartment, which has really lifted the mood. It's so refreshing'

FOR STOCKIST DETAILS **GO TO PAGE 153**



BEDROOM

Beautiful original stained-glass windows overlook the roof terrace.

Distressed leather chair, price on request, Andrew Bewick. Belgian Oak lamp base, around £250, Myriad Antiques. Bedlinen, from a selection, Cologne & Cotton



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MIX & MATCH

A clever combination of bespoke buys and affordable style solutions has introduced an elegant and practical note to Nene Granville's city apartment

FEATURE EMMA J PAGE | PHOTOGRAPHY RACHAEL SMITH

SITTING ROOM

Open shelving allows Nene to display decorative pieces, including colourful glassware, ceramics and glossy books.

Walls, shelves and fireplace painted in Purbeck Stone estate emulsion, £38 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball. Arte-M Feel contemporary solid-oak coffee table with glass shelf, £968, Trendy Products, would suit this space. George Nelson Bubble Saucer ceiling light, £410, John Lewis

INSPIRING



HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY

Victorian maisonette

LOCATION

Southwest London

ROOMS Hall, sitting room, kitchen-diner, two bedrooms, bathroom

PURCHASED 2011

PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'Before moving here, I lived in a Victorian house nearby,' says Nene.



Many city apartments suffer from a lack of space and storage and Nene Granville's flat – the first and only property she viewed – was no exception. Nevertheless, she quickly spotted its potential. 'I liked it as soon as I realised it had its own front door,' says Nene of the Victorian maisonette in a leafy part of southwest London, close to where she grew up.

However, the property's poor layout couldn't be ignored. Narrow doorways made the place feel dark, there was no storage in either of the two bedrooms and the small kitchen was tucked away at the back of the flat, accessed via a wide area that was neither a room nor a hallway. 'I knew that the layout could work better,' says Nene, 'but I wanted to bide my

time. So I moved in, painted throughout, added built-in wardrobes and shelving in the bedrooms and tried to get a sense of the space before making any major changes.'

It was three years before Nene decided how best to reconfigure her home, with help from an architect friend and also interiors specialist Beth Dadswell of Imperfect Interiors. 'Having fresh eyes was really helpful,' says Nene. 'We looked at the layout objectively and opted to incorporate the redundant area at the rear of the property into a completely redesigned kitchen. This eliminated all that dead space and allowed for a more seamless flow.'

The area where the kitchen was situated has been turned into a dining area with bespoke banquette seating incorporating concealed





KITCHEN

Bistro-style tiles and tongue-and-groove panelling add texture and character.

Valencia Beach White wall tiles, 15 x 7.2cm, £164.47sq m, Fired Earth. Units painted in Off Black estate eggshell, £53 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball. Mid-Century-style charcoal grey wall lights, £50 each, Rockett St George, are similar

DINING AREA

Space-saving foldaway chairs and a banquette provide casual but comfortable seating.

Terje folding chairs in black, £11 each, Ikea. Walls painted in Crystal Grey matt emulsion, £39 for 2.5 litres, Sanderson. Steel windows, price on application, Clement Windows



MASTER BEDROOM

Valuable storage space is hidden under Nene's bed.

Nest double storage bed, £1,695, Heal's. Walls painted in Slipper Satin estate emulsion, £38 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball. For a cowhide rug like this one try City Cows, around £200

BATHROOM

Glazed metro wall tiles, which also appear in the kitchen, lend a chic, vintage feel.

Mino 600 drawer unit and basin in white gloss, £299, Bathstore. Godmorgon two-door mirror cabinet, £250, Ikea, has this look



storage underneath. For a streamlined look, the sink and washing machine are hidden behind concertina doors, and light has been channelled into the space from the adjoining bathroom via a glazed upper-wall panel. Chic Crittall-style doors at the back of the kitchen lead to a small courtyard garden, and elsewhere Nene widened doorways, and replaced the bathroom door with a glazed option to maximise light.

Working in fashion, Nene is adept at mixing high street with high end items, and applied the

same principle to this interior. She added brass handles and kickboards to inexpensive units and topped them with Corian surfaces for a touch of luxury. 'This is a clever approach because you end up with a more authentic interior,' she says. 'It's about getting the basics right and knowing where to compromise.'

The reconfigured flat is a far cry from the space Nene first encountered. 'Then I was just pleased to have my own front door, but now I'm more excited by what lies beyond,' she says. 25



INSPIRATION

'I travel a lot for work and get ideas from everywhere; it's great to bring home pieces from other cultures'

FOR STOCKIST DETAILS **GO TO PAGE 153**

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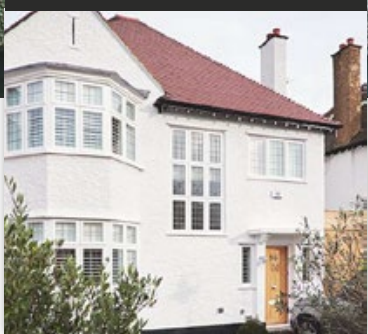
A NOVEL DESIGN

With an emphasis on colour, Carly and Adrian Willson stamped their unique style on their new home

FEATURE KAREN JENSEN-JONES | PHOTOGRAPHY NICK SMITH



INSPIRING



HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY

A 1920s detached house

LOCATION Southeast London

ROOMS Hall, kitchen-diner/family room, library, study, utility, cloakroom, boot room, five bedrooms (one en suite), two bathrooms

PURCHASED 2008

PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'Before moving here, we lived in a cottage nearby,' says Carly.



Buying and totally renovating a new home can be a daunting prospect but Carly and Adrian Willson had no such worries when they found a run-down, detached house for their growing family.

'The house had been beautifully renovated by previous owner Frances Halliday, who had her own interior design company,' explains Carly. Knowing they would want to replan the layout to suit their needs and lifestyle, they asked Frances to work with them, and she agreed. 'We liked her style and felt we had similar tastes,' says Carly. The

LIBRARY

This is a peaceful spot to relax with a book.

Shelves and panelling, price on application, Frances Halliday Interiors. Room painted in Blue Ground estate eggshell, £53 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball. Grey Liatorp coffee table, £165, and Gäser high-pile rug, £140, both Ikea

project was a huge challenge, one Carly admits she couldn't have done without help. 'We changed everything, including adding an extension at the back, taking down a wall in the hall and opening up the staircase. Windows and doors were also replaced and floors lowered. Nothing was left untouched, and Frances was key to the renovation.'

Once the building work was underway, both Carly and Adrian were on hand throughout the process. 'We knew that we wanted an open-plan space where we and our children, Charlie, 11, Molly, 9, and George, 5, could hang out together,' says Carly, 'so the large rear extension is now a



FAMILY ROOM

Strategically positioned sofas create a cosy enclosed zone.

Sofa and cushion fabric, Chinaz Peony, £41m, Designers Guild. Tofteryd coffee table, £170, Ikea. Engineered oak wooden floor, for similar try The Wooden Floor Specialist, £69sq m. The George Carwardine adjustable angular giant floor lamp in silver, £90, Value Lights, is a match



KITCHEN

Merging floors subtly delineates each area.

Units, price on request, Bells. Vintage Pendant cooker hood, £1,850, John Lewis. Hanging trio lights, £178, Bedside. The Hex tiles are similar, £1.49 each, Fired Earth



DINING AREA

The traditional dresser works well in a contemporary setting. Find an antique dresser like this, from £500, at Antiques Atlas



GUEST BEDROOM
Carly enjoyed layering up texture, pattern and colour here. Saru teal wallpaper, £58 per roll, Designers Guild. Marbles lamp shade, from £20, John Lewis



MOLLY'S BEDROOM
A variety of windows and vibrant colours make for a bright and welcoming attic space. Gulört owl cushion covers, £3 each, Ikea

spacious kitchen-diner and family room in one.' A clever use of colour, flooring and fabrics has created individual spaces that integrate into a highly functional yet stylish room.

Despite their love of open-plan living, the pair have also created a panelled library on the ground floor, where they spend quiet time away from the hub of the house. 'We chose a calming wall colour and installed a modern fire to give it a warm and cosy feel,' explains Carly. 'We also lowered the floor, which has made the room feel more spacious and improved the height of the window.'

An interesting array of floor and wall coverings appears throughout and has become

a bit of a signature feature. 'I looked through plenty of interiors magazines and cut out everything I liked,' says Carly. 'That's where I first spotted the lovely hexagonal tiles we now have in the kitchen. Using them as a splashback and laying them unevenly against the wooden floor was something I would never have dreamt of doing, but we were sure it would work. We couldn't be more delighted with the result.'

Now, the couple are certain that they won't be moving house again any time soon. 'I knew the sort of home I wanted to create,' says Carly, 'and now that all the work has been done, I feel we really have achieved our ideal.' 25

BEST BUY

'The reconditioned dresser in the open-plan dining area, because it's quite an old-fashioned piece yet it works perfectly in the middle of our busy, modern living space'



HALL
Inlaid Moroccan floortiles have a stylish rug effect. Floor tiles, price on application, Habibi Interiors. Walls painted in Radicchio estate emulsion, £38 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball



EN SUITE
Floor-to-ceiling tiles create a striking monochrome finish. Black and white hexagon tiles, £128.98sq m, Fired Earth



BATHROOM
This unfussy space is given an edge with eye-catching geometric tiles. Boat bath, from £1,380, Bathroom Luxuries. Rhombus floor tiles, £274.87sq m, Fired Earth

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INSPIRING



HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY

Terrace built in the late 1800s

LOCATION North London

ROOMS Hall, sitting room, kitchen-diner, utility, family room, cloakroom, study/bedroom, four bedrooms (two en suite), bathroom

PURCHASED 2009

PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'We lived in a five-bedroom Victorian house nearby,' says Caz.

Into the LIGHT

The challenge of a poky Victorian terrace couldn't obscure Caz Myers' vision for a bright family home

FEATURE RACHEL LEEDHAM
PHOTOGRAPHY RACHAEL SMITH

SITTING ROOM

Rich textures and a palette of silver, gunmetal and blue lend a sophisticated air.

Vintage pressed metal ceiling (used as wall art), Petersham Nurseries. Bespoke sofas, Caz Myers Design, upholstered in Blackjack 71237/009, £155.6m, Abbott & Boyd. Bespoke vintage patchwork rug, £350sqm, Bazaar Velvet



KITCHEN

'This is smaller than our last, so to be clever with storage, there are cupboards on the breakfast bar side of the island,' says Caz. Bespoke kitchen units, Caz Myers Design. Vintage bar stools, from £175 each, Ines Cole. Istorla bespoke light grey engineered floorboards, £87.95sq m, Jordan Andrews



DINING AREA

'When we have a party, we move the table into the garden, and the banquette becomes a sofa,' says Caz.

Bespoke banquette, Caz Myers Design, upholstered in 15294, £228m, Zimmer + Rohde. Bespoke dining table, price on application, Andrew Nebbett Antiques. Vintage 1950s chairs, from £1,275 each, The Old Cinema

Caz Myers recalls the first time she and her husband, Lewis Macleod, viewed their Victorian house in London. 'The hall was painted brown, and it was so dark, we couldn't see each other,' she says. 'All I could hear was Lewis's voice asking what on earth we were doing here!'

Thankfully, interior designer Caz could see beyond the gloomy, warren-like layout. 'What's now the kitchen-diner and family space was four small rooms with no sense of light or flow,' she recalls. 'We knocked down walls to create a big space at the rear of the house.'

During the building works, the family camped on the top floor. The first phase saw the first floor reconfigured into a guest suite, plus bedrooms for the couple's children, Ruby, 9 and Ross, 6. Next came the remodelling of the ground floor and finally, the top floor was transformed into a master suite.

Hanging on the sitting room wall is a section of a pressed-tin ceiling, which would originally have decorated a building in New York. It now provides a wonderfully textural piece of wall art, inspiring the tactile scheme of velvet-upholstered furniture and a patchwork rug in a palette of silvery greys, enriched with shots of teal. 'I absolutely love teal and navy blue,' says Caz. 'I team them with warm shades to keep the spaces inviting.' And her favourite hue resurfaces in the kitchen-diner, where a deep-buttoned banquette in plush navy velvet is teamed with a bespoke zinc-topped table.

The top floor, where the couple knocked two rooms together to create a bedroom, dressing area and bathroom has the feeling of a boutique hotel, with its open-plan layout and vintage French bed reupholstered in dove grey velvet. 'We were adamant that we wanted the bedroom at the back of the house, overlooking the garden, so I positioned the bathroom and dressing area in the front room,' Caz explains.

Now, Caz is already contemplating another renovation. 'We lived in our last home for seven years and we've been here for six, and although I love it here, I wouldn't rule out looking around again,' she confesses. 'Call it a seven year itch, but I simply love a project!'

1 & 2 MASTER BATHROOM

A lacquered vanity unit, chandelier and roll-top bath make an indulgent bathroom and dressing area.

Bespoke vanity unit, Caz Myers Design. Duravit Puravida handbasin, £275, CP Hart. Bianco Assoluto floor tiles, £59sq m, Checkalow

3 RUBY'S ROOM

'I'm a firm believer in creating spaces in which children can grow,' says Caz.

Similar sunburst mirror, from £150, Of Special Interest. Chair upholstered in Penthouse pleated velvet in Dusky Pink, £165m, Zinc Textile



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DINING ROOM

The couple love to entertain guests in this elegant space. Italian Lighting Centre sells Murano glass fruit chandeliers, from £860. Monika rug, from £899, BoConcept

INSPIRING



HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY Grade II listed house built in 1924

LOCATION Surrey

ROOMS Hall, sitting room, dining room, kitchen-diner, billiard room, office, six bedrooms (three en suite), two bathrooms

PURCHASED 2009

PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'We lived in the Bishop's Palace house in Rochester,' says Sally-Ann.

NEW BEGINNINGS

Moving to a 1920s Arts & Crafts house heralded a change of direction for Sally-Ann and Simon Maine-Tucker

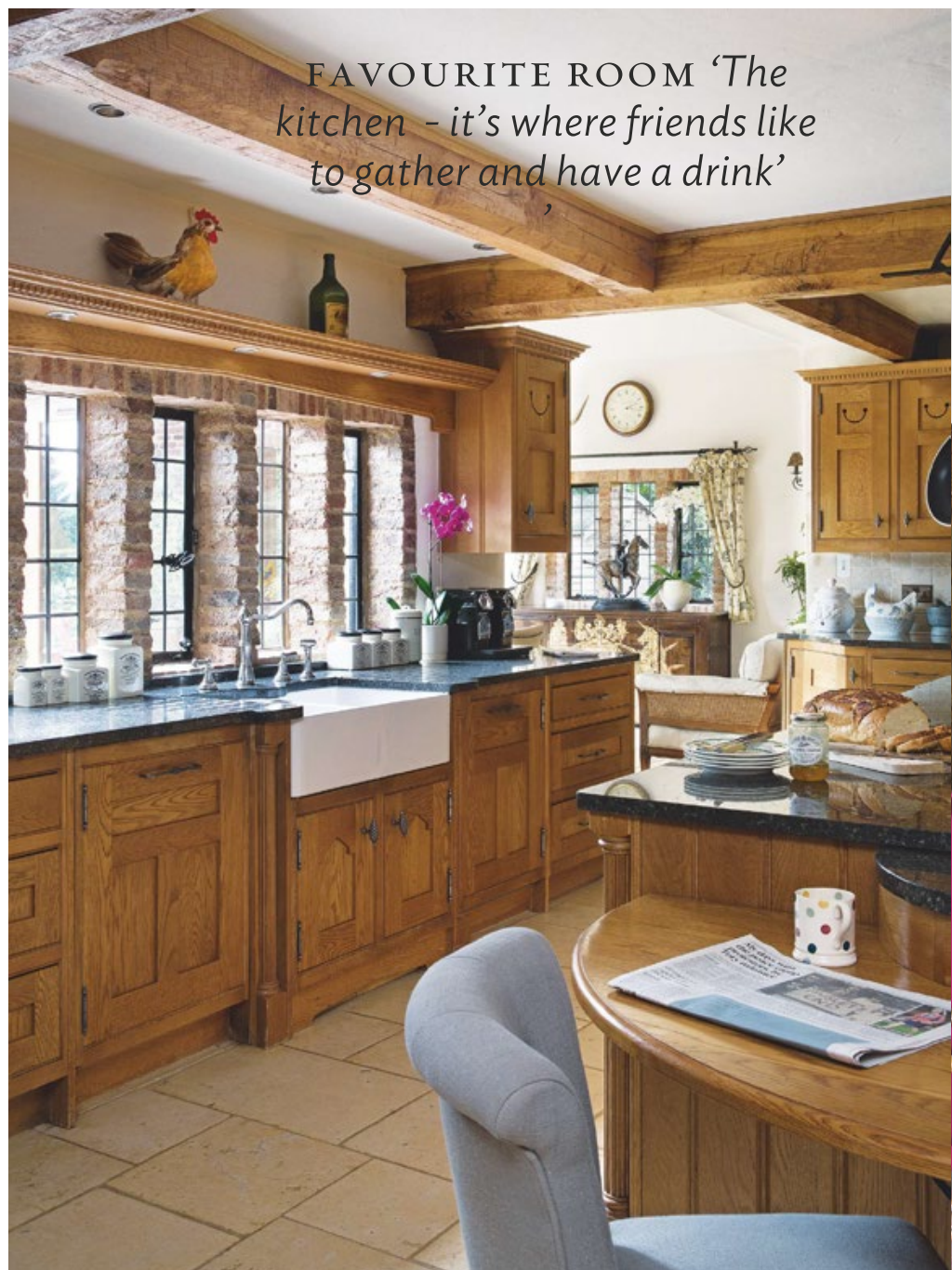
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SITTING ROOM
The dark oak panelling has been carefully stripped back to a paler colour.
Cocktail cabinet with handpainted deer scene, £8,800, Kensa Designs.
Coffee table, £1,300, Lots Road Auctions



KITCHEN
'I love cooking especially when I can make use of my vegetable patch,' says Sally-Ann.
Henley dining chairs in mocha linen, £295 each, Neptune

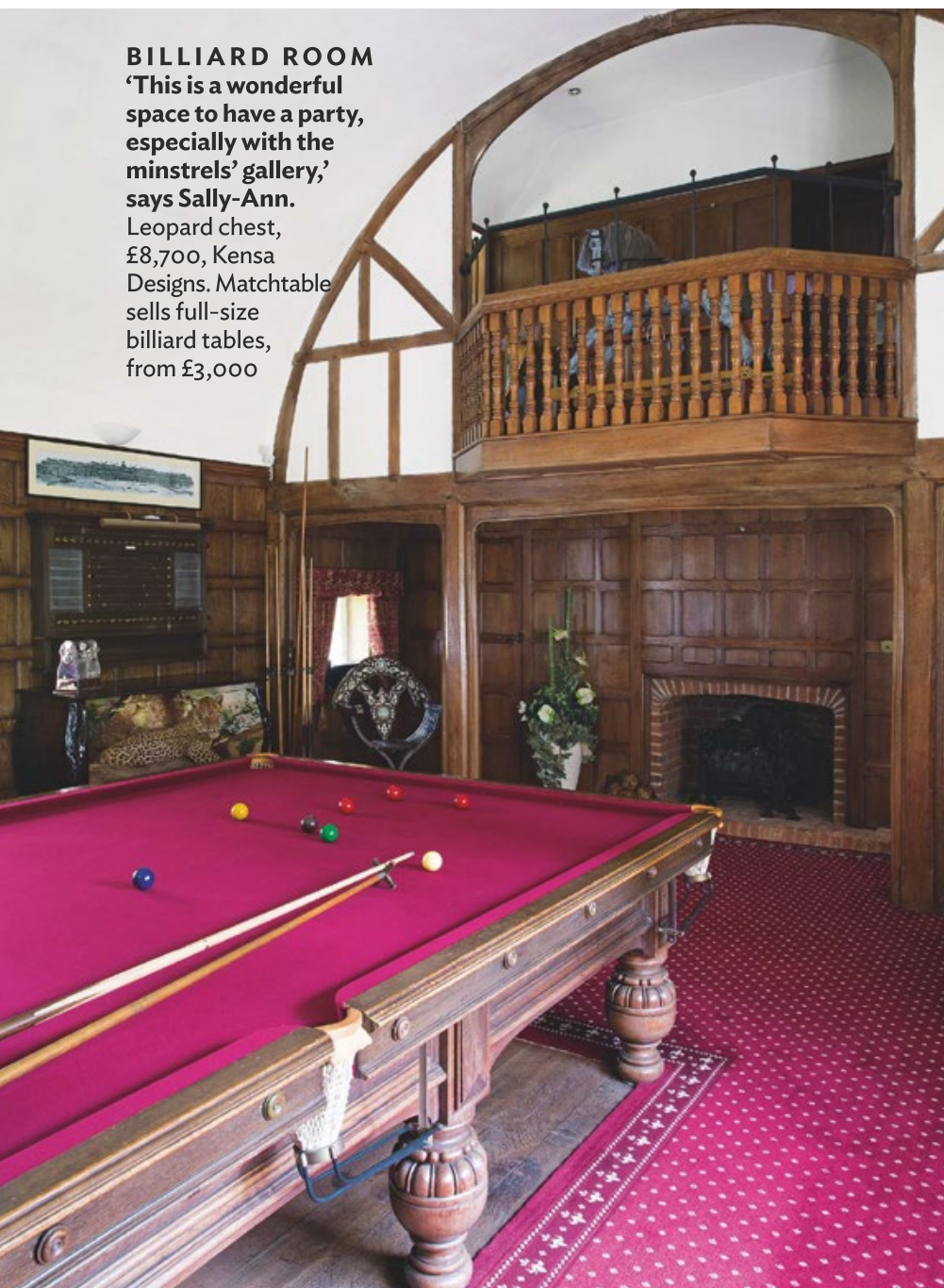


FAVOURITE ROOM 'The kitchen - it's where friends like to gather and have a drink'



BILLIARD ROOM
'This is a wonderful
space to have a party,
especially with the
minstrels' gallery,'
says Sally-Ann.

Leopard chest,
 £8,700, Kensa
 Designs. Matchtable
 sells full-size
 billiard tables,
 from £3,000



Before Sally-Ann and Simon Maine-Tucker and their son, Theo, 13, moved to their 1920s property five years ago, they had been living in the historic Bishop's Palace, in Rochester, Kent. 'It had a lovely walled garden and was opposite the cathedral and castle, but the rooms were quite higgledy-piggledy and, apparently, it was haunted,' says Sally-Ann. The commute to London was also very long and, eventually, the couple decided to look for a more convenient home.

Then they saw this property in Surrey that had everything they wanted. Built in 1924, it was designed by Baillie Scott using a symmetrical, E-type plan with a cupola containing an old ship's bell. 'We loved the house, especially as there was so much space,' says Sally-Ann.

Luckily, there was very little structural work to do to the ground floor of the house. 'The kitchen and breakfast area had already been extended by the previous owner,' says Sally-Ann, 'but we did create a little snug, which is a very handy chill-out area.' Upstairs was a different story, as all the bedrooms needed to be redecorated. 'I began with the spare rooms as I was keen to create a welcoming home,' says Sally. 'We love having people to stay and wanted them to feel as comfortable as possible.'

Meanwhile, the master bedroom and en-suite bathroom took a while to get underway. 'I was working full time in the City, and didn't have enough hours to devote to the house,' says Sally-Ann. 'This meant it took a year to redesign the rooms exactly the way we wanted them.' When they got around to it, reworking the bedrooms turned out to be a complete overhaul. 'The master en-suite bathroom was a major job and

a huge expense,' admits Sally-Ann. 'Part of this was because we'd put in a walk-in shower and a large bath, so we needed to have extra water tanks.'

Once the bathroom was sorted, Sally turned her attention to the master bedroom. 'I chose a range of beiges and duck-egg blue hues to create a feeling of calm, and we had the wardrobe doors made to match the panels on the walls,' she says. Next door is the dressing room which also doubles as an extra bedroom should they need it. 'When I worked in the City, I used to have to get up at 4.30am, says Sally-Ann. 'I had this room made so I didn't disturb Simon.'

When the bulk of the work was finished, Sally-Ann was able to start filling her home with treasured and unusual possessions. 'Many of the furnishings and accessories are from our holidays or are inspired by things we've seen abroad,' she says. 'It's lovely having souvenirs, but antiques sometimes need permission to be shipped out – we had to wait three months for the bathroom Buddha to arrive.'

Sally-Ann loves statement pieces but often struggled to find exactly what she wanted for the house. It was during discussions with her decorator, Ken Hook, that she had a bright idea. 'I love individual, one-off items,' she says, 'and Ken is a great painter, so we decided to buy old furniture, then restore and hand-paint it with unique images. We've now set up a company offering the same service.'

Having now left her job to focus on this new venture, Sally-Ann has the added advantage of being able to spend more time at home. 'I love looking after my vegetable patch and seeing the deer coming into the paddock is just magical,' she says. 25



MASTER BEDROOM This sumptuous bed sets the style for this blue and beige scheme.

Louis XV upholstered bed, from £7,575, And So To Bed. Shimmer bedspread in duck-egg blue, £80, John Lewis, is similar



GUEST EN SUITE The large shower area is a luxurious addition to the spare bedroom.

Bayonne Provence limestone tiles, £79sq m, Mandarin Stone

FOR STOCKIST DETAILS GO TO PAGE 153

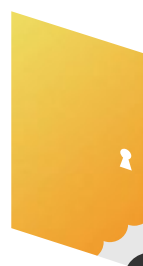


MASTER EN SUITE
The contemporary freestanding bath takes centre stage in this traditional room. Oceanus bath, £4,794; basin, £576, both Castello Luxury Baths. Pipit voile panels, from £15 each, John Lewis, have a very similar look



GUEST BEDROOM
'I love to mix textures and fabrics,' says Sally-Ann. Truscott Amethyst quilt, £140, Laura Ashley. Similar leather sofa, £1,900, John Lewis. Där Lizard ceiling pendant, £225, Ocean Lighting

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PO Box 772, Peterborough PE2 6WJ, 01733 385170

(24 hours), Vol 18 No 5 ISSN 1369529

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Distributed by Marketforce (UK) Ltd, Blue Fin Building,

110 Southwark Street, London SE1 0SU (020 3148 5000)

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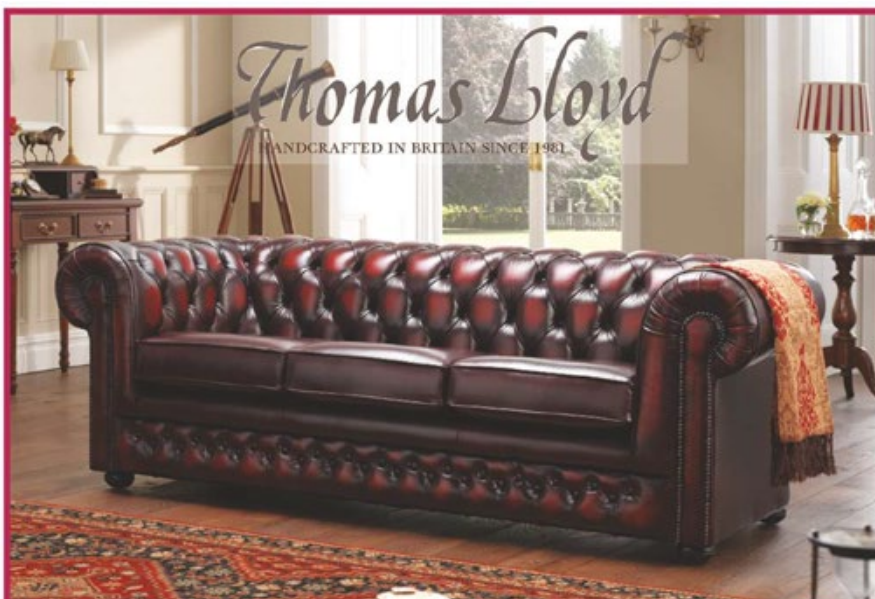
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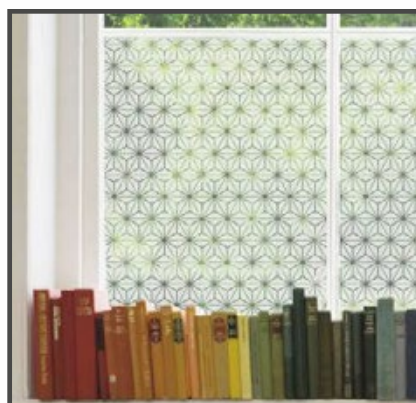
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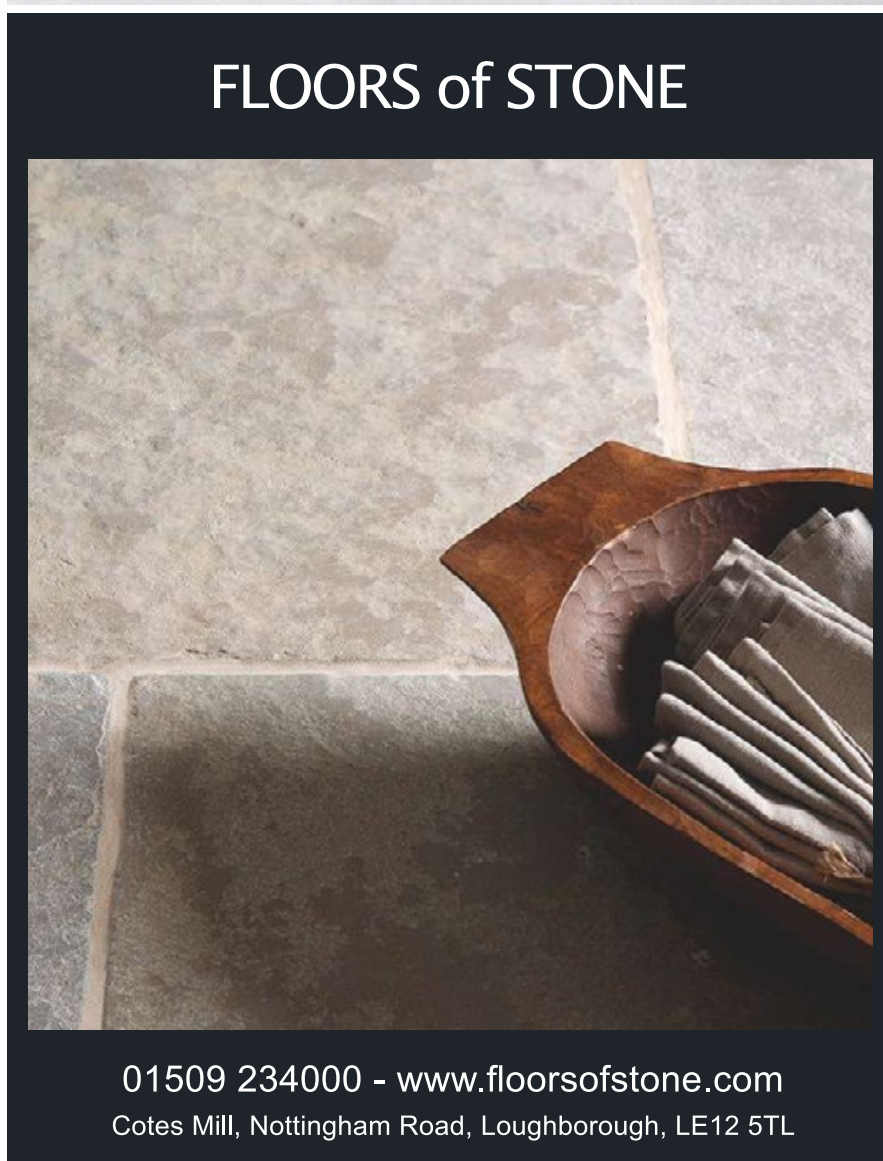
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