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RECALL: 05/04/09

INSPIRING HOMES

■ INTERIOR DESIGNERS SHARE THEIR SECRETS

■ KITCHEN & BATHROOM IDEAS

THIS PAGE

Classic sofas and Vicky's restrained colour scheme create an oasis of calm. Lucite lamps by Talisman, 020 7731 4686, talismanlondon.com, pick up light from the window, repeated in the lucite coffee table by Hilary Batstone, 020 7730 5335, hilarybatstone.com. The only pattern is in the rug by Christopher Farr, christopherfarr.com, 020 7349 0888, and floral cushions. Walls are in Sand 1, Paint & Paper Library, 020 7823 7755, paintlibrary.co.uk.



TIMELESS ELEGANCE

Vicky Wormsley's renovated town house is a textbook example of the success that comes from a clever use of space and attention to detail

THIS PAGE Double doors between the dining room and study off the kitchen make this an ideal space for entertaining. Vicky has decorated the space lightly, using a couple of really good antiques, paired cleverly with contemporary items. The Metropolis table and crossback chairs are all from JVB, 020 7730 3991, j-v-b.com, while the oak floor is from Chester Row Interiors, 020 7730 6650, chesterrow.com. Curtains throughout were made by Pat Giddens, 020 8969 8291.





LEFT A new conservatory-style roof floods the kitchen with light, which ekes down through the glass floor into the children's playroom in the basement. The units and granite worktops by Bulthaup, bulthaup.co.uk, are from the Kitchen People, 020 7495 3663, while the conservatory is by Glasshouses, 01420 520009, glass-houses.co.uk.



THIS PICTURE
The basement is below the part of the kitchen that has a glass floor, which fills it with natural light by day. The room serves as the children's playroom and a media room, so Vicky made certain there was plenty of storage space to keep it tidy.



LEFT A neutral colour scheme in the entrance hall allows the restored encaustic floor tiles to sing out. The neutrals also complement the 1920s Parisian ceiling light, one of four designs of this style from a local antiques dealer. For similar floor tiles, try Original Features, 020 8348 5155, originalfeatures.co.uk.



With plenty of experience in restoring period properties for clients, Vicky Wormsley naturally jumped at the chance to turn a Victorian town house into her own family home.

She realised, however, that the restoration would be a huge undertaking.

THE CHALLENGE

Located in a tree-lined street in west London, the Grade II listed property that Vicky and her husband chanced upon had been turned into

14 bedsits during the 1950s. "There was a kitchenette in every room," says Vicky, "and as the building had been uninhabited for years, it was infested with pigeons. There was no central heating or damp-proof course but the original period features, including the shutters, cornicing and fireplaces were intact."

With planning applications and a team of builders and architects on side, Vicky, who is also the interior design director of the property developer Chester Row, quickly set to work gutting the house and drawing up plans. "We wanted to create a beautiful yet

functional family home, one that would be light and airy, and where the spaces would flow together seamlessly," she explains.

A large conservatory has been added to the back of the house, a glass floor installed in part of the kitchen and the doors between the ground floor rooms have been removed. Taken as a whole, these changes fill the spaces with light, allowing them to merge into one another.

PRESERVING FEATURES

The original shutters were restored and the marble fireplaces taken away to be cleaned

RIGHT It was a while before Vicky found a painting for the bedroom. She chose this one by Emma Alcock at Cadogan Contemporary Art, 020 7581 5451, cadogancontemporary.com, because it adds character without breaking the gentle mood of the cream and eggshell blue scheme. The bed is by Simon Horn, 020 7731 1279, simonhorn.com.



BOTTOM LEFT Cream limestone and walnut help to ensure that the bathroom is a relaxing sanctuary. The limestone is Ivory Premium from LimeStone Gallery, 020 7735 8555, limestonegallery.com.



BOTTOM RIGHT The basement guest bedroom boasts a wallpaper that oozes luxury - Briar in Pearl/White by Clarissa Hulse, 020 7375 1456, clarissahulse.com. Soho side tables by Andrew Martin, 020 7225 5100, andrewmartin.co.uk, add a contemporary feel.



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and treated, while the listed encaustic tiles on the entrance hall floor were repaired. The only sticking point was the basement. "We were keen to install a bathroom," Vicky says. "But the space, formerly a housekeeper's cupboard, was too small and planners wouldn't let us alter the layout, so we decided to turn it into a shower room instead."

MODERNISING TOUCHES

Rather than a period kitchen, Vicky plumped for a streamlined and easy-to-maintain design; outside there is a garden of minimalist style,

which proved a feat in itself. "There were huge conifers that interfered with our boundary wall and it took six months to negotiate their removal. We then had problems getting the new trees through a narrow doorway but, now, it's a beautiful, Zen-like space."

DECORATIVE SOLUTIONS

The renovations took 18 months to complete and, even after the family had moved in, it was another year before the interiors were complete. Today, the house is a mix of elegant antiques and more modern and quirky pieces,

which give it its individual charm. "I hate houses that look as if they have been made with a cookie cutter," says Vicky. "I much prefer the unexpected, but not so much that it becomes discordant. It is far more rewarding to take your time to search for the right objet or piece of artwork than to make do with something ordinary, I feel."

"With a family home, one has to find a balance between your perfect design vision and making your home liveable, and I think I've achieved exactly that."

Turn to page 132 for more inspiration. ►

H&G FOCUS

...ON INTERIOR DESIGNERS' HOMES

Two similar London homes are given very different treatments by their designer owners



ECLECTIC APPEAL

- Designer, Mirka McNeill Farmer
- Terraced house
- Home office on top floor
- Minimal structural work
- Recycled architectural elements

WORDS AMANDA HARLING
PHOTOGRAPHS ANDREAS VON EINSIEDEL

TIMELESS ELEGANCE

- Designer, Vicky Wormsley
- Nineteenth-century town house
 - Formerly 14 bedsits
- Structural and decorative work
 - Listed restrictions

WORDS KAREN LESTER
PHOTOGRAPHS MEL YATES

