

Mid-century modernised



Clean lines, pared-back details and dramatic colours make this extended and renovated house stand out from the crowd

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Underfloor heating runs beneath the polished concrete surface in the open-plan, modernist-themed kitchen

LEFT The loft conversion and ground-floor extension have been designed to mirror one another. Structural steel runs along the full width of each addition, with brick plinths to the left and right. Broad expanses of glass have been incorporated to create a sleek, minimal look

IN BRIEF

LOCATION Battersea, south London
TYPE OF PROPERTY
1950s end-of-terrace house
BEDROOMS 4 **BATHROOMS** 2, plus WC
PROJECT STARTED August 2017
PROJECT FINISHED March 2018
SIZE OF HOUSE 175sqm
TOTAL BUILD COST £320,000
CURRENT VALUE £1.4 million



When Anna Proctor, age 40, and her husband John, 41, embarked on their search for a new home, tracking down a property with plenty of room for their young family was a top priority. ‘We lived in a small, two-bedroom flat and were climbing the walls with the two children in such a limited space,’ says Anna. Rufus and Scarlett are six and four.

‘I decided to centre our search, via a property finder website, on the children’s school to see what popped up,’ says architect John. ‘This 1950s house a short distance away was the result.’ Less than a week later, he had been to see the property, saw how it could be improved and had put in an offer to buy it. ‘The process started on a Friday night, and by Tuesday our offer had been accepted.’

The couple had a clear vision of how the house could be transformed. ‘We liked that it was a 1950s build, and we

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didn’t want to shy away from that,’ says John. Inspired by the clean lines and crisp design of the experimental, mid-century Case Study Houses in California, he sketched out plans for a new rear extension, loft conversion and full refurbishment. ‘The design ethos came from the fact that there’s little decoration in houses from this period; everything is quite utilitarian. But one of the challenges was the low ceiling height – there’s no lofty 2.8 or 2.9 metres that you get in Victorian properties.’

At the rear of the house, John proposed two simple brick-built spaces to form the ground-floor extension and loft conversion. Keen to create a visual break between the original property and the extension, the new-build was constructed in a cream brick to give a retro, 1950s feel. The rest of the house was painted in a dramatic charcoal hue. ‘We chose a dark colour because we wanted to differentiate our house from the rest of the properties on the terrace,’ says Anna. ‘This shade, Basalt from Little Greene, offsets the planting at the front, too.’ »

LEFT As part of the project, the back garden was levelled and re-landscaped. This has created a seamless transition between the inside and outside spaces



The painted brick surfaces continue in the new kitchen

a fairly big cost implication because we had to hack out the concrete slab that underpinned the property,' says John. 'We went through with it in the end. It's one of those subtle but important decisions that's made an enormous difference, as we've been able to increase the ceiling height as a result.'

For John, the installation of the glazed doors at the back of the house was one of the construction highlights; for Anna, having the kitchen worksurface fitted was her most memorable moment. 'The quartzite finish we chose brings the space to life. Whereas everything else is quite blocky, this is very detailed. It looks like marble but it's more robust – it's practical, which we need.'

The living room is to the right of the main entrance and is one of Anna's favourite places. A modern box-style bay window has brightened the space, but the couple have decided to embrace the fact that this area receives limited natural light. 'The colours we've used are quite moody and dark but it feels very cosy,' says Anna.

On the first floor, Rufus and Scarlett's room spans the entire length of the house. 'It's got a double set of windows, which is quite unique,' says Anna. 'The children spend a >>

'Construction was smooth and efficient. John had worked with our builder for about 10 years, so we knew we could trust him'

John conducted various surveys before the family moved in, and on the day of exchange he submitted two planning applications to the local authority. 'Technically, everything we were doing was covered by permitted development. But there was some uncertainty because the property had already been extended in the 1980s. By submitting two applications, I was covering my back,' he says.

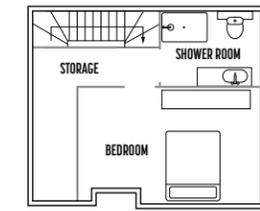
The applications were swiftly approved by the council. 'We weren't proposing anything radical,' adds John. 'Plus, there are two loft conversions down at the end of the terrace and a big shed on the plot next door, so we weren't affecting anyone else's outlook.'

Just six weeks after moving in, the family had to move out of the house so the builders could begin their work. 'Construction was smooth and efficient,' says Anna. 'John had worked with our builder for about 10 years, so we knew we could trust him.'

One of the biggest decisions revolved around whether to lower the floor slab at the back of the house. 'It had



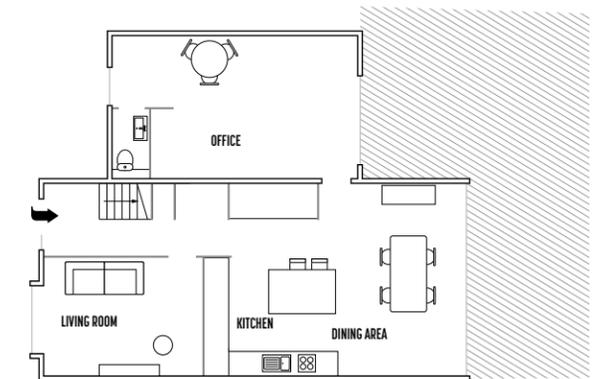
FLOOR PLANS



LOFT FLOOR



FIRST FLOOR



GROUND FLOOR

The lines of the home were inspired by John's appreciation of the postwar Case Study Houses in California, designed by such architectural greats as Charles and Ray Eames, Pierre Koenig and Eero Saarinen



The steel balustrades are painted cream. Beneath the stairs, there are bespoke doors on storage cupboards and a compact utility area

lot of time in this room because there's so much space. All their friends want to come for a playdate, because it's fine for them all to make a mess upstairs, out of the way.'

Floor-to-ceiling glazing has also been fitted in the couple's bedroom in the loft. John and Anna plan to put a sedum living roof on the extension, so they can look down from their window onto an expanse of green.

Despite his architectural experience, John stresses that every scheme presents a fresh opportunity to learn something new. 'You pick up things as you go,' he says. 'I definitely have more appreciation for the cost side of things now I've completed my own project.'

While they're happy to stay put for now, the couple haven't ruled out the prospect of tackling another renovation in the future. 'I'd like to do up an older property next time, so we have a different experience,' says Anna. 'It'd be great to look into historical details and incorporate some reclaimed materials.'

The couple are certain that the new spaces in their home have made a positive difference to the family. 'It's been totally life-changing for us,' says John. 'Running a business and raising a young family can be quite stressful and living in the small flat didn't help. Now the children have space to breathe.' GD



The lack of natural light at the front of the property has been embraced by decorating the living room in dark colours. A woodburning stove creates a strong focal point

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Pale terrazzo tiles were installed in the couple's en-suite bathroom. It also features full-height glazing, with ventilation provided by an opening aluminium panel from Velfac

RIGHT AND BELOW
Spanning the entire length of the house and featuring windows at both ends, the children's bedroom is a striking showcase of Anna's creativity



The first-floor staircase is made of birch plywood and leads up to the main bedroom and shower room in the newly converted loft



GDHOMES 1950s END OF TERRACE

The pale exposed timber beams in the main bedroom match the ceilings in the dining area



SUPPLIERS

PROJECT TEAM
Architect Proctor & Shaw
(020 8244 6110; proctorandshaw.com)
Structural engineer
Engineeria (020 7580 4588;
engineeria.com)
Landscape consultant
Shelley Hugh-Jones (07786 808 819;
shelleyhughjones.co.uk)

STRUCTURE
Bricks Ibstock
(01530 261 999; ibstockbrick.co.uk)
Sliding doors in ground-floor extension Maxlight

(020 8896 0700;
maxlight.co.uk)
Windows and glass doors
Velfac (01563 313 552;
velfac.co.uk)
Loft staircase GoFix Carpentry
(07824 428 992;
gofixcarpentryltd.com)

FIXTURES & FITTINGS
Custom-made kitchen
Diamond Construction
(020 8648 5600;
diamondconstructions.com)
Bathroom fixtures Vado

(01934 744 466; vado.com)
Bathroom tiles Terrazzo Tiles
(020 7485 7227; terrazzo-tiles.co.uk)
Oak floor The Natural Wood
Floor Co (020 8871 9771;
naturalwoodfloor.co.uk)
Polished concrete floor in the open-plan kitchen
The Concrete Flooring Contractors
(020 3369 5156;
theconcreteflooring.com)
Paint Little Greene
(0845 880 5855; littlegreene.com);
Paint & Paper Library (0845 880 5844;
paintandpaperlibrary.com)

Bathroom lighting DMLights
(0800 056 7226; dmlights.co.uk)
Pendant lights above kitchen island Flos
(+39 030 2438; flos.com)
Wall lights Tom Dixon
(0330 363 0030; tomdixon.net)
Radiators Victorian Plumbing
(01704 339 982;
victorianplumbing.co.uk)

FURNITURE & ACCESSORIES
Stove Stovefitter's
(01492 535 852;
stovefitterswarehouse.co.uk)