

Bright ideas

A chance encounter led one family to a new home that has been remodelled spectacularly to accommodate their every desire

Report and styling: Mandy Nolan Photography: Vince Hart



Left: A simple palette of colours was chosen for the master bedroom, while swathes of fabric inject luxury into the scheme. The bedspread is a combination of Monti Purple and Swaffer Prelude Purple fabrics by Jab. **Above:** Mirrored elements add glints of glamour to the bedroom and the Aston silver mirror and matching mirror dressing table are stunning embellishments in this space. The tub chair is upholstered in Osborne & Little's Volante fabric for a decadent look. **Below:** A beautiful feature wall papered in Cole & Son's Malabar damask design creates a focal point in the master bedroom. The bespoke headboard and ottoman was made by Leslie Charles Interiors and covered in opulent crushed velvet, Swaffer Veneto in Silver Grey. Lisa found the mirror furniture at India Jane, which are complemented by glass Opera bedside lamps in amethyst glass from Heathfield.

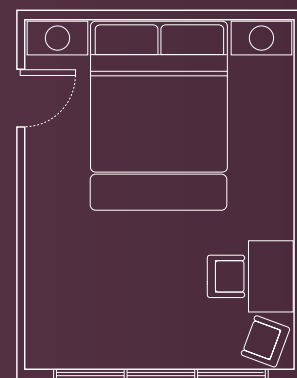


Lisa and Robin Staunton Gleaves were not on the hunt for a property when they spotted a new house for sale close to their home. However, the find proved to be an opportunity they couldn't resist. "With two young sons – Max, 8 and Joel, 5 – we felt our previous home was becoming cramped," Lisa explains, "but as the boys were settled in good schools and I had plenty of friends in the area we'd decided to stay where we were and undertake major extensions. When we spotted this house on the market, though, we realised it was a perfect solution to our space issues."

Built in an attractive New England colonial style, the house offered everything the couple required in terms of living space with generously proportioned rooms featuring

high ceilings and an abundance of glass that suffused the interior with light. The icing on the cake, however, were the finishing details – polished timber floors, underfloor heating and state-of-the-art sound technology fitted throughout. The layout was even flexible enough for Lisa, an eye health practitioner, to set up a therapy room on the ground floor.

The couple had originally planned to live in the house without implementing alterations, but after inhabiting the space for a few years they realised there was a lot more they could do to improve the property. "We had all the basics and because there was so much glass it was lovely and bright," Lisa explains, "but I felt that the white interior was too cool for a family home and ▶





Above: The functional part of the kitchen has been carefully planned so that cooking, storage and preparation surfaces are located in one area and served by a capacious central island. Walnut cabinets are fused with white granite work surfaces for a warm yet contemporary design. **Left:** The original kitchen layout placed an island across the room blocking the kitchen from the dining area. By turning the island around, designer Martyn Ive has instantly opened up the space giving a lovely linear feel that flows from work areas to the dining area. **Right:** The dining area is light and spacious. Lisa chose a stunning extendable oval glass table with steel framework teamed with Icon leather chairs from Calligaris. Leslie Charles Interiors had the white table lamps specially made to Lisa's height specifications, while the Calligaris Bend cabinet combines elements of the kitchen and dining area with glass-fronted doors and walnut veneered top.



I was keen to inject some colour and texture. I wanted to bring in the wow factor."

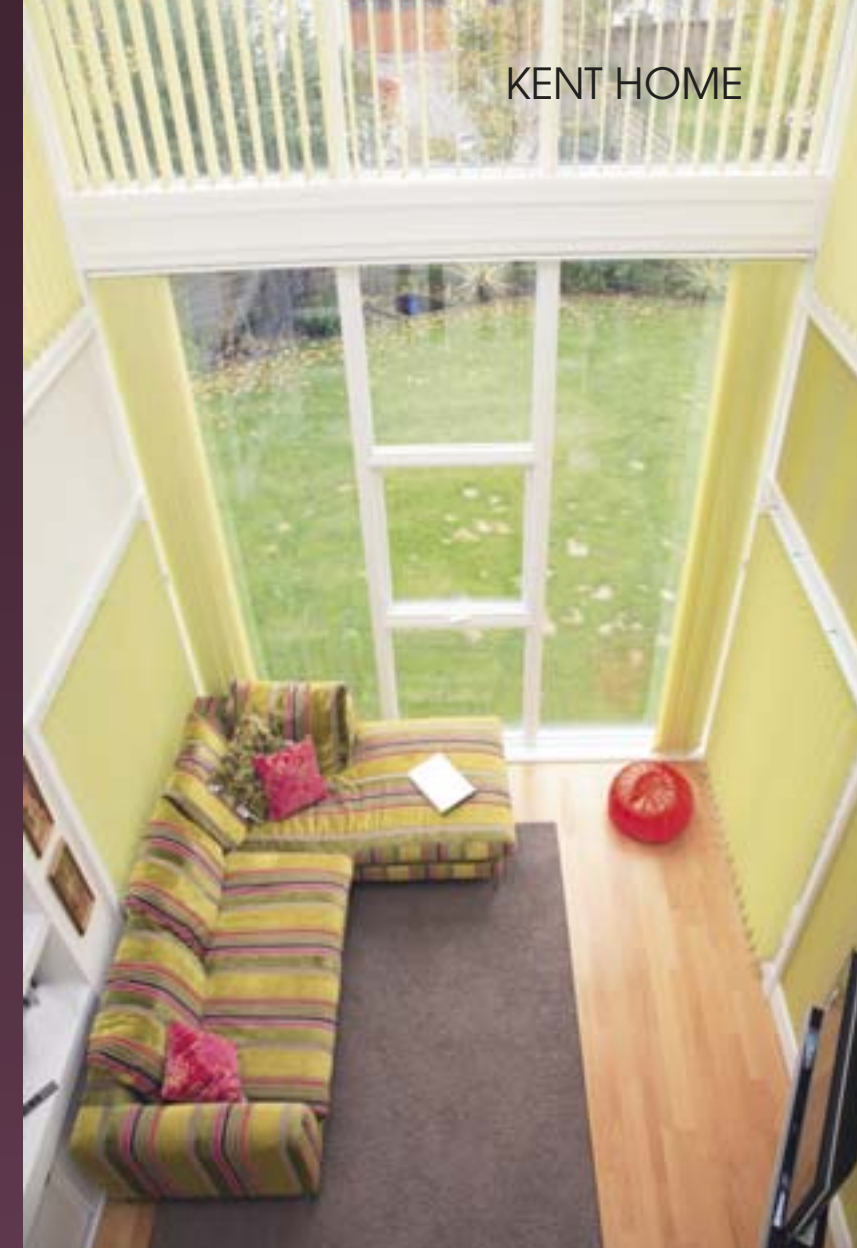
With a passion for design and a love of bright colours, Lisa set about finding an interior designer to assist in the development of a scheme for the house, and a friend recommended Leslie Charles Interiors located in Tonbridge. "I popped into the showroom and loved the things they had on display," Lisa explains. "We briefed them to come up with a scheme to breathe new life into the rooms by adding a combination of colour and texture with a touch of luxury to give it a special feeling."

While Lisa and designers Leslie and Elizabeth Charles came up with a sophisticated and contemporary plan for the entire house, the redesign of the master bedroom was one of the rooms at the top of the 'to do' list. Here, the brief was a scheme that felt "luxurious, inviting and comfortable". Indeed, the final design successfully intertwines Lisa's love of bold colour with touches of luxury, which is translated in a palette of rich purples and sumptuous fabrics.

"When I spotted the purple damask wallpaper from Cole & Son I just had to have it," Lisa recalls. "It was a key element of the design and the scheme evolved from there. I just couldn't resist the opulent fabrics. I chose the most luscious silk for the drapes in our bedroom in a beautiful rich purple colour and worked the rest of the room from there." The banding effect on the curtains was achieved by sewing two separate pieces of fabrics together in a horizontal formation and the same technique was repeated for the bedspread and scatter cushions to unify the look.

To add further drama and elegance, Leslie and Elizabeth created the huge bespoke headboard upholstered in silver-grey crushed velvet with an ottoman to match – these elements emphasise the lavish textures in the room. Hints of glamour were also introduced into the space by mirror bedroom furniture, while tub-style chairs in a combination of deep purple and pink add pretty splashes of colour to bring the scheme together.

The ensuite bathroom surveys a streamlined look that is echoed throughout the house. "I hate unnecessary clutter in a bathroom so I wanted wall-mounted ceramic basins that coordinated with the WC – they look much sleeker and are practical because they are easier to keep clean," Lisa says. "The room is wonderfully light and bright so we could afford to choose the caramel-coloured tiles to give it some warmth. I like the textured effect as it softens the



Above: The kitchen extends into a garden room where the family can come together to relax overlooked by double-height glazing framing the garden. The comfy sofa and cushions are upholstered in a cut velvet stripe, while the Jab rug completes the look. **Below:** The zesty theme in this comfort zone is defined by the wallpaper and complemented by Silent Gliss Colorama vertical blinds in lime green. **Opposite:** The double-layered honed Kashmir White granite counter on the island provides a stunning focus within the room. The island was designed to seat six comfortably for casual suppers, while concealed lights underneath the overhang set the mood for entertaining. The bar stools in white leather from Danmar match the design of the formal dining chairs perfectly.

look and is again practical." The room is finished with white timber shutters that filter light during the day and offer total privacy at night. "Spotlights over the mirror wall cabinets also inject a lovely light at night time if I want to relax in the bath," Lisa elaborates.

The last, and perhaps largest, remodelling project on the agenda was the kitchen. Despite the generous proportions of most other rooms in the house, the kitchen felt lacking in space and was poorly laid out. "The kitchen is one of the most important rooms in the house so we invested in the best kitchen we could find," Lisa says, who enlisted the expertise of Martyn Ive from Danmar Kitchens for the redesign.

"We wanted to give the room a classic-contemporary style and Martyn suggested a design that complemented the Italian furniture in the dining area. The combination of walnut and stainless steel contrasts beautifully with the glass and leather dining furniture," Lisa explains. "I love the rich colour of the walnut and in this room it gives the cabinetry the feel of furniture rather than functional kitchen units."

Once the colour of the cabinets was finalised, planning the surrounding space proved relatively straightforward. "Martyn's input was invaluable. He spotted quick and easy solutions to improve the layout," Lisa smiles. The American fridge-freezer for example, in its original position, jutted out into the room and blocked the light, so Martyn suggested encasing it within the cabinetry, while part of the glass doors was partitioned and the sink moved to its current location so that it overlooks the garden. "Moving this element meant the cooking zone could be incorporated into cabinets on one wall," Martyn elaborates, "and keeping the main wall units along one side limits the block of colour to a single area, while the rest of the space is kept light and open with base cupboards."

A large island separates the kitchen area from the dining zone emphasising the depth of the space. "My priority was for a generous island that provided seating for six as well as space for preparation work. I wanted an area where we could eat as a family or entertain friends casually," Lisa says. "We finally settled on a lovely honed granite in Kashmir White, which looks fantastic," she says. The couple also decided to add another layer of granite on top of the first for a solid, chunky look. "We so loved the beautiful texture that we asked Martyn to repeat the design to give a superior effect."

The dining area continues the easy, relaxed atmosphere. In this zone, the smooth, elegant curves ▶



DESIGN

Interior designer Leslie Charles Interiors (01732 362092)
Kitchen design Danmar Kitchens (01732 848333 or www.danmarkitchens.co.uk)

KITCHEN

Cabinetry Danmar Kitchens, as before
Hob, extractor, single ovens, steam oven and plate warmer Miele (01235 554455 or www.miele.co.uk)
Dishwasher Neff (0844 892 9033 or www.neff.co.uk)
Wine cooler Baumatic (0118 933 6900 or www.baumatic.co.uk)
American fridge-freezer Maytag (0844 499 0101 or www.maytag.co.uk)
Coffee machine Zanussi (0870 572 7727 or www.zanussi-electrolux.co.uk)
Sink and tap Trispray tap, Franke (0161 436 6280 or www.franke.co.uk)
Work surfaces Honed Kashmir White granite, Danmar Kitchens, as before
Splashbacks Bespoke, Danmar Kitchens, as before
Dining table, chairs and sideboard Calligaris (www.calligaris.it)
Blinds (garden room) Silent Gliss (01843 863571 or www.silentgliss.co.uk)

BEDROOM

Wallpaper Cole & Son (020 7376 4628 or www.cole-and-son.com)
Fabric on bed head and ottoman Leslie Charles Interiors, as before
Curtains Jab Anstoezt (020 7349 9323 or www.jab.de)
Chairs Osborne & Little (020 7352 1456 or www.osborneandlittle.com)
Furniture India Jane (020 7351 1060 or www.indiajane.co.uk)
Lamps Heathfield (www.heathfield.co.uk)

BATHROOM

Porcelain tiles and sanitaryware Unitrade (01227 453898 or www.uni-trade.co.uk)
Timber shutters Blinds and Shutters (01603 879423 or www.blinds-shutters.co.uk)

COST

A similar kitchen would cost around £25,000, a similar bathroom around £5000 and a similar bedroom around £15,000



The ensuite features two basins, a spacious bath and walk-in shower adequately serving the couple's needs. White timber shutters offer a practical window dressing and privacy when required

of contemporary Italian furniture define the space. The glass-topped oval table sits in alignment with the island, uniting the two areas, while the white leather dining chairs are chic for formal entertaining but practical and easy to clean when used by the boys. The sideboard in walnut with frosted glass doors provides extra storage for china beside the table and also blends beautifully with the tone in both the kitchen and dining space. Plus, for those times when the family want to come together and chill out, this kitchen-

dining space links to a light-filled garden room. Inside, double-height glazing provides a peaceful viewpoint overlooking the garden, while a relaxing scheme of fresh green picks up the hues from the garden beyond. Lisa and Robin are thrilled with their newly revamped home. "The designers have fulfilled every request perfectly," Lisa concludes. "The house has become a light-filled, welcoming environment that allows the whole family to live stylishly and comfortably. It's just perfect for our lifestyle." **[KBB]**



Light pours through the rear of the house to enhance the sense of space, and highlights the many contemporary touches that fill the transformed home