

# ACCESS ALL AREAS

A radical redesign has created a stylish, workable home for a young family in this Victorian apartment in Edinburgh

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## HOME PROFILE

### WHO LIVES HERE

Devon McHugh, who works for Museums Galleries Scotland, her partner Jeff Sanders, a project manager for Dig It! (digitscotland.com), and their son Gabriel, two

### THE PROPERTY

A first-floor, two-bedroom, B-listed Victorian apartment in Edinburgh's New Town

**PRICE** £201,000

**MONEY SPENT** £50,000

**WHAT IT'S WORTH NOW**  
£315,000



**PORTRAIT**  
Devon loves the new spacious layout in their Victorian apartment  
**LIVING AREA**  
West Highland terrier Ham sits on a sofa from John Lewis & Partners. The room features an eclectic mix of styles, with

a 1920s Iranian rug from The Nomads Tent sitting alongside two modern hexagonal side tables from Oliver Bonas. A new Stonecraft fire was installed and the original marble surround restored by local decorator Stephen Barry ▶



**EXTERIOR**

The Victorian flat is located in Edinburgh's historic New Town

**KITCHEN**

In a nod to the building's roots, the custom-built units are traditional in style, while also featuring modern touches, such as the blend of colours: the base units are painted in Stiffkey Blue, the wall units in Wevet and the island in Black Blue, all by Farrow & Ball. The metal bar stools from Cult Furniture add another contemporary twist

**DINING AREA**

Built-in seating makes the most of the compact breakfast spot, while shelving offers storage and display space. The banquette seating has been painted in the same colour as the kitchen units for a streamlined look, while the copper pendant helps to create a defined zone



When Devon and Jeff bought their Victorian apartment in 2012, they knew right away that they wanted to make some changes, but it took them five years to pluck up the courage to get started. 'As soon as we moved in, we re-did the bathroom and carried out some cosmetic renovations, but aside from that, we lived in it quite nicely for the first five years,' Devon recalls. Then, in 2017, with baby Gabriel on the way, the couple took the plunge and enlisted the help of Calum Duncan Architects to bring the flat in line with 21st-century living as well as give them the space they desired.

'We had a pretty good idea of what we wanted to do,' Devon recalls. 'For example, we knew we wanted an open-plan living space and an ensuite bathroom, but to get that, we would have to change the layout of the entire flat. That's where Calum really came into play; he offered a practical and clever design that would utilise the space we had in the most

effective way possible.' The original layout consisted of a sitting room and a long, narrow bedroom at the front of the property, a spacious hallway with a bathroom and WC in the middle, and at the back was the kitchen and a second bedroom. 'Calum suggested we merge the bedroom, sitting room and one of the hall cupboards at the front, bringing them together to create a modern kitchen/living/dining space, and have both bedrooms at the back of the property,' explains Devon. The bathroom remained where it was and the old kitchen became the main bedroom, borrowing space from another hall cupboard to create an ensuite.

'If I'd been left to my own devices, I would have removed all the cupboards in the hall,' says Devon. 'Thankfully, Calum pointed out how impractical that was, asking where we would put our ladders, ironing board and buggy. So we had a re-think.' While two of the cupboards in the hall had been re-purposed, it was still 'the hallway of many doors' with little personality. So, with a bit of clever thinking, a wall of bookcases was built in the corridor to create a library feel. ▶





'I came up with the idea of installing a hidden door that accesses the bathroom, and I'm so pleased with the result'

**KITCHEN**

Double-height cupboards take advantage of the tall ceilings, while the large window and open-plan layout allow plentiful natural light to flood in. The original pine flooring has been stained for added character,

which, along with the Reginox Belfast sink from Victorian Plumbing, echoes the property's history

**HALLWAY**

Once a disused corridor, this area has been transformed with bespoke shelving units and

desk, built by Guy Scott at Broad Workshop. The rug by Lorena Canals at Scandiborn and Roscoe ottoman from Made add to the warm, library-like feel. The bathroom is in its original location, but is now hidden behind a bookcase door ▶





**MAIN BEDROOM**

Previously the kitchen, this room has been transformed into a sophisticated space with soft, sumptuous materials, including sweeping curtains, a pink upholstered armchair and Persian-style rugs. The glamorous chandelier is from Martinez Antiques and the bed is from Revival Beds

**BATHROOM**

Devon bought the sink unit from The Nomads Tent and had the basin added. The marble floor and bath tiles are from Edinburgh Tile Studio FOR STORE DETAILS SEE

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which also included a small, useful desk space. 'I came up with idea of installing a hidden door that accesses the bathroom in the hallway, and I'm really pleased with how it turned out,' smiles Devon.

As the ensuite is in the middle of the flat, there's little natural light. 'Calum came up with the perfect solution – a sliding door that sections off the WC making it private, while the bath area is left open to the bedroom and the light from the windows,' Devon explains.

'As first-timers, and with a project this complicated, we didn't really know what we were doing. We were very lucky to have Calum, our architect, and Karl from Mott Joinery, who was our main contractor, to keep us on track and offer advice. There was a lot of balancing between form and function and sometimes function won out, especially when it came to the kitchen worktops. My first choice was white marble but then we thought about how we cook and eat. We're vegetarians who eat a lot of turmeric-based curries – so white and porous is not a good combination! So we decided to go for concrete; it's cool

and durable, and it's a bit unexpected in a Victorian flat,' says Devon.

Eager to reference the property's roots but not create a pastiche, the couple decided on a bespoke kitchen that would also maximise the proportions of the room. 'Guy at Broad Workshop had already made the bookcases in the hallway and we were confident he could do what we wanted in the kitchen,' says Devon. 'To keep costs down, we bought Wickes carcasses and Guy built the kitchen around them.'

Devon was keen to include a blend of colours in the kitchen and did plenty of experimenting. 'In the end, we used Farrow & Ball's Stiffkey Blue on the base cabinets and Wevet on the wall units. All the walls had been replastered and I wanted to take advantage of the smooth, fresh surface by keeping them light, so they were painted in Farrow & Ball's Blackened, while the island was painted in Black Blue to add contrast.'

The flat is still evolving but the everyday workings of the renovation have ticked all the boxes. 'The flow of the flat is so much better than it was before and we seem to have more space as every inch is utilised.' ■