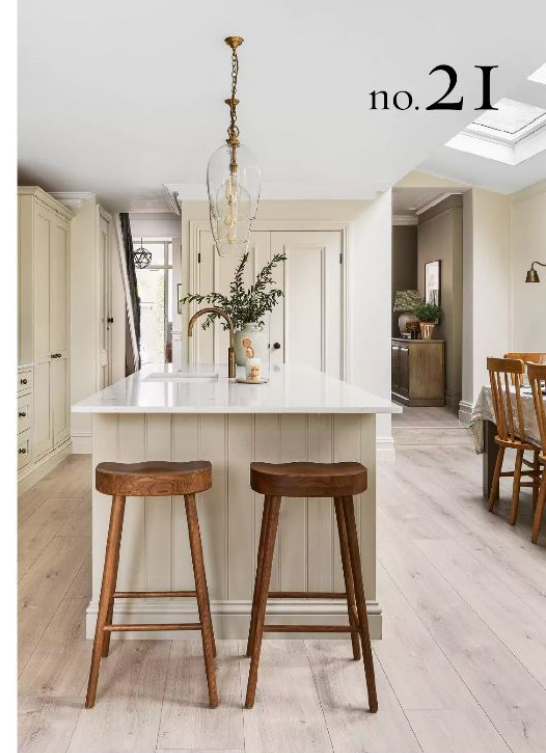


**KITCHEN**

'I upgraded the Shaker kitchen with a faux chimney breast, joinery details, high-end handles, sink, tap and lighting,' says homeowner and designer Claire Totman.

Helmsley kitchen, DIY Kitchens. Cotswold cabinet knobs, Armac Martin. Regular Priscilla pendant lights, Pooky. Sink, Shaws of Darwen

**LIVING AREA**

Earthy, natural colours help this area blend seamlessly with the garden beyond.

Isla sofa in Clay House Basket Weave, [Sofa.com](https://www.sofa.com). For a similar cushion cover, try West Elm's classic linen in Dark Olive



# Time after time

*The palette of warm, earthy neutrals that designer Claire Totman chose for the reinvention of her Edwardian terrace will always be in style*

WORDS JANE CRITTENDEN | PHOTOGRAPHY ROBIN QUARRELLE AND SARAH GRIGGS

**HOME TRUTHS**

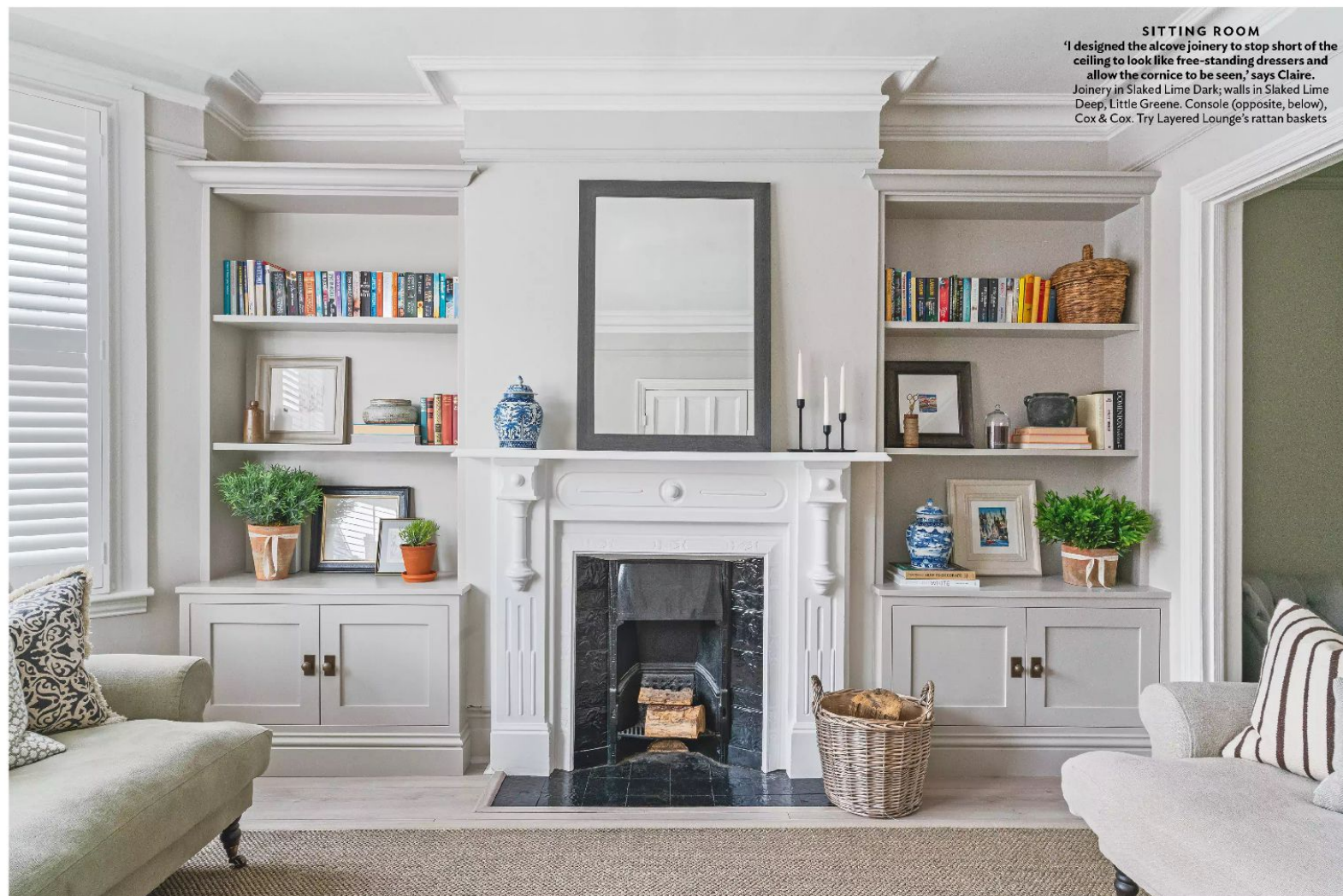
**THE PROPERTY**  
Edwardian terrace

**ROOMS** Sitting room, snug, kitchen-diner/living area, cloakroom, three bedrooms, bathroom

**LOCATION** Surrey



**SNUG**  
The pleated empire lampshade has a classic look that's modernised with a lively print. Empire lampshade in Savannah block-printed cotton in Green, Pooky. Art by Valerie Davide



**SITTING ROOM**  
'I designed the alcove joinery to stop short of the ceiling to look like free-standing dressers and allow the cornice to be seen,' says Claire. Joinery in Slaked Lime Dark; walls in Slaked Lime Deep, Little Greene. Console (opposite, below), Cox & Cox. Try Layered Lounge's rattan baskets

As the owner of an architecture and interior design studio working on residential builds for clients, understandably Claire Totman was only looking for a renovation in her next house move. A period property was a must, too – a view shared by her husband, Dan. 'My taste is classic and timeless, which is also our signature approach to client projects,' says Claire. 'The look goes hand in hand with older homes that are less likely to date and which have a build quality often surpassing modern-day properties.'

After children – Georgie, now six, and Freddie, who is three – came along, the couple wanted to move up the

property ladder to a larger home. They snapped up an Edwardian terrace near the River Thames, which had been empty for four years, likely because of the scale of renovating that needed doing. Of course, none of this fazed Claire who works with house projects like this all the time.

'People are often scared off by damp, replumbing, rewiring and so on but we knew what to do, and also had plans to build a kitchen extension,' explains Claire. 'Instead, my eyes were fixed on all the original period features – cornices, skirtings, architraves, ceiling roses, panelled doors and fireplaces. The previous owner was the son of the

original Edwardian owner and the house was virtually intact.' Claire's vision was straightforward: extend into the side and rear and modernise sympathetically.

In phase one, they repaired the damp, put the original front door back and replaced the plastic windows with double-glazed sash windows. They also refitted and extended the bathroom and decorated everywhere except the kitchen. 'The extension was phase two of the project, so we could only use the front of the house downstairs for a while, dashing into the cold kitchen when we had to,' explains Claire. 'My goal was to make the new space as bright and

### MAIN BEDROOM

Subtle pattern breaks up the neutral tones in this sophisticated scheme.

Cushion made in Tobias & The Angel fabric, Love Your Home. Cooper light wall fitting in antique brass, Pooky. Leaping Buck print by Debbie Harris



### GEORGIE'S BEDROOM

'I purposefully chose a long-lasting neutral fabric for the bed so I could add colour to the walls and with accessories,' says Claire.

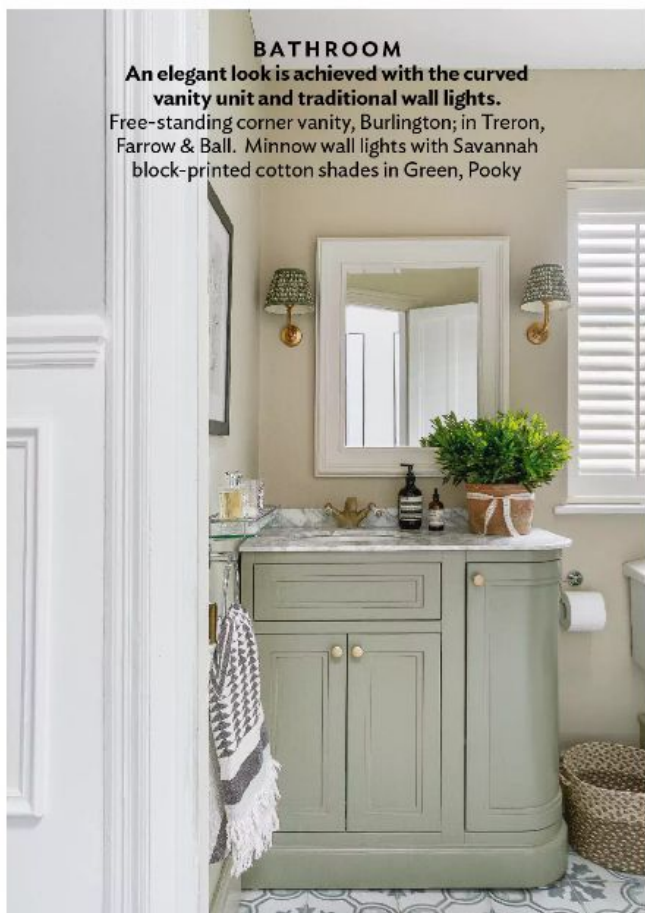
Rose bed upholstered in Beautiful Broad Weave fabric in Shell, Button & Sprung



### BATHROOM

An elegant look is achieved with the curved vanity unit and traditional wall lights.

Free-standing corner vanity, Burlington; in Treron, Farrow & Ball. Minnow wall lights with Savannah block-printed cotton shades in Green, Pooky



### 'PANELLING IS A SIMPLE WAY TO ADD CHARACTER THAT IS ALSO TIMELESS'

open as possible with full-height doors and large roof lights to catch the sun throughout the day.'

By now, the decor of Claire and Dan's home was cool greys but a few years on, her taste migrated towards earthier neutrals. 'I think country hotels in period and listed properties are so inspirational, such as Beaverbrook in Surrey and The Pig hotels,' says Claire. 'I began to love warmer taupes and beiges with green undertones. So as I bought these colours into the new kitchen extension, we redecorated the rest of the house, too.'

In textiles, Claire leans towards quieter, plainer looks for large furniture, such as sofas and bed heads, and adds busier patterns in cushions to bring in texture and colour. She collects blue and white antique ginger jars and chinoiserie china – inspired by a piece inherited from her late grandma – and Pooky lighting is a firm favourite. 'I love the traditional contemporary crossover look of their lampshades and how you can introduce a print in a small way that isn't overpowering,' she says. 'I've used them throughout the house, including the bathroom and the children's bedrooms.'

'We absolutely love our home and we've achieved what we set out to do. The interiors are modern yet classic and timeless and bring out the original period features.'

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