

STEEPED *in tradition*

Having previously lived in a listed cottage, Julie Schofield and

Jonathan Dean wanted their new-build home to feel full of history

FEATURE JANE CRITTENDEN | PHOTOGRAPHY NIKHILESH HAVAL

DINING AREA

'Mixing the different style of Ercol dining chairs creates an informal and lived-in feel,' says Julie. Similar Ercol Windsor dining chair, £450, Hunter Furnishing. Vintage Ercol Goldsmith dining chair, £275, Vinterior.

HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY

New-build oak-framed house

ROOMS Sitting room, study, kitchen-diner, cloakroom, living room, utility, boot room, three en-suite bedrooms, dressing room

LOCATION Anglesey, Wales



‘A lot of our pieces are second-hand because we wanted our new build to feel lived-in and not super-polished’

SITTING ROOM

‘We step down into this lower-level space and sink into our comfy sofas; it’s lovely and relaxing,’ says Julie. The custom fire (left) is double-sided so can be used here or in the kitchen.

Crumpet sofa in Thimble clever linen is similar, £2,495 for medium. Loaf. Similar Welsh blanket, Knot Garden throw in Blossom, £179. Melin Tregwynt. The Oriental Rug Merchant has a selection of Afghan rugs, from £1,125. Similar chandelier, from £450. Antler Designs



KITCHEN
The cabinetry here introduces soft colour. Suffolk kitchen painted in Dove Grey and Honed Slate, price on request, Neptune



MAIN BEDROOM
Drapery at the window and on the bed looks luxurious. Carulea rug in Venetian Blue is similar, £2,295, Oka



MAIN EN SUITE
'I'm not a fan of tiles and a half-pannelled wall has more of a country feel,' says Julie. Try Highbury slipper bath in Dove Grey, £459, Bathroom Mountain. Chair, £299, Ercol



BEDROOM
The striking bed is a classic French antique. Try Opera bed frame, £1,365, Perch & Parrow. St David's Cross Welsh blanket, £320, Trefriw Woollen Mills

For all of her life, Julie Schofield has known the plot in rural Anglesey where her house sits. Her parents bought a couple of acres in a tiny hamlet some 40 years ago and built her childhood home here. And she was delighted when they offered her and husband, Jonathan Dean, a business consultant, some land to build their own home.

'I adore it here. We have gorgeous countryside and sea views, and this is where I'd come and visit the ponies as a child,' she says. 'And our house has never felt like a new build, which says everything about the design, the authenticity of the oak and the familiarity of our outlook.'

As soon as the couple received planning permission, Julie began researching designs that complemented the rural landscape, requesting brochures from oak frame companies. And this is how she found Welsh Oak Frame.

LOCAL MATERIALS

'Jonathan and I both loved our listed cottage, and I knew I'd need to persuade him that a new build could have just as much character,' says Julie. 'We visited one of Welsh Oak's houses. It was cosy and welcoming and had the feel of a much older property. We fell in love with it.'

The couple worked with one of Welsh Oak Frame's designers to create a layout to accommodate the sloping site. As well as the impressive galleried landing, a sitting room sits beneath a vaulted ceiling where a huge fireplace, dual-sided to the kitchen-diner, makes a grand centrepiece. Julie project-managed the entire build but decided to take her time with the interiors, getting a feel for the place.

'Everything about the house was influenced by what we could see outside,' she says. 'We used local limestone for the fireplace, Anglesey render for the chimney, oak flooring and stone tiles,' says Julie. 'I decorated everywhere in Farrow & Ball's Shaded White and Pointing before we moved in, thinking I would update with colour later on. But I haven't needed to; the shades are perfect, making the oak frame the star of the show.'

INSPIRATION FROM NATURE

Over the years, Julie changed some of the furniture but has bought very little new. 'Our antiques from the cottage looked too ornate and too small in the large rooms,' she says. 'And we shopped for second-hand because I didn't want the house to feel polished, but have a rustic, lived-in feel. I'm glad I waited for the right pieces to come along.'

The Ercol rocking chair, for example, was a £10 bargain easily updated with paint and 1960s style became a firm favourite, with simple, lightweight designs harmonising with the oak. Julie took inspiration from nature for colour, adding earthy tones in grey-blues, greens and pinky-reds in cushions, Welsh blankets and Persian rugs. 'The rugs were important. I had to be patient to find the right colour and size, with a bit of wear.'

Julie says they're very comfortable here but there are still things to do, like reupholstering the French antique guest bed. 'The biggest compliment we're given is that our home doesn't look like a new house,' she says. 'In fact, it's always felt like our home: because I project-managed each step or because I grew up here? Either way, we love it.' 🍷