

SMART CASUAL

Period details are at the heart of this scheme, with contemporary elements creating an all-important relaxed feel

FEATURE JANE CRITTENDEN | PHOTOGRAPHY ASTRID TEMPLER

PROJECT DETAILS

DESIGNER

Rebecca Hughes Interiors (rebecca.hughesinteriors.com)

PROPERTY

A Grade II-listed early Victorian detached house

WORK

Part of a whole house renovation

LOCATION

West London

This family home hadn't been decorated in quite a few years and the aim was to modernise it without losing its period feel. Rebecca Hughes Interiors was the first contractor to be appointed. 'The sitting room was to be a quiet space where my client could have drinks with friends, or sit and read a book,' says Rebecca.

1 STARTING OUT

The period features caught Rebecca's eye. 'The light coming through the large window was beautiful, as were the high ceilings but there was little furniture so the space felt cavernous and a little cold,' she recalls. 'My brief was to integrate the room with the house alongside the new open-plan space downstairs without losing its formality.'

2 NEUTRAL TONES

Putty cream decoration creates a light and warm foundation. 'It's rare we use white as it can look sterile,' says Rebecca. 'We added to the base with a tone-on-tone approach – the rug is a similar shade to the curtain fabric; the armchair is tonally similar to the ottoman with colour variation in the texture.'

3 BRINGING BALANCE

Furniture placement complements the architectural symmetry of the room. Sofas are centred around the fireplace and the existing chandelier, and line up with the window, too. 'Matching lamps on the console behind the sofa add depth,' says Rebecca. Elsewhere everything is scaled up to harmonise with the room's dimensions – a large mirror above the fireplace and new curtains draw the ceiling down so the room doesn't feel bottom heavy. 'A tall drinks cabinet in one alcove is matched in height with the art hung above the console in the other,' Rebecca adds.

4 RELAXED FEEL

Smart modern furniture looks less formal and a mid-century style chair is angled for casual comfort. 'Sometimes a separate sitting room can be forgotten in the home,' says Rebecca. 'The success of this project is how often this room is used.'

INFORMAL ELEGANCE

'I love how the architectural features and high ceiling have a sense of stepping back in time, with contemporary furnishings providing the twist relevant for today,' says Rebecca.

Walls in Stone II, Paint & Paper Library. **Gibson sofas**, The Sofa & Chair Company; **upholstered** in Pollack's Accolade Moss velvet, Altfield. **Enzo armchair**, Fiona McDonald; **upholstered in Métaphores** Eclat Mousse fabric, Abbott + Boyd. **Bespoke rug**, Silk Avenue. **Bay console table**, Julian Chichester. **Bespoke mirror**, Patrick Ireland. **Ann Farley artwork** (right), Mylo Art