



## HOME TRUTHS

## THE PROPERTY

Victorian townhouse

## LOCATION

Southwest London

**ROOMS** Sitting room, kitchen, family room/dining area, study, three bedrooms (one en suite), bathroom

**PURCHASED** 2015

**PREVIOUS PROPERTY** 'We were living in a mews house in South Kensington,' says Sam.

## SITTING ROOM

An oversized mirror reflects light and gives the illusion of a wider space. Round bevelled mirror, £69.99, The Range, has this style. Cushions in Sidonia in Magenta Fig, £149m, GP&J Baker at Jane Clayton

## FAMILY ROOM

'The neutral walls allowed me to play with colour and pattern in the fabrics,' says Sam. Ottoman in Cubis in Pomelo, £46m, Romo. The Anelle lamp base, £78, Lighting & Lights, would suit this space



Sam and Guy Dawson have lived a back and forth life together for the past 14 years. Guy's work as a non-executive director means being based in London, and Sam had ties to Hove where she lived with her children, Holly and Charlie, now 22 and 20. When the couple bought this Victorian London townhouse four years ago, a Bob Dylan print in an art gallery sparked Sam's decorating ideas.

'I instantly loved its blend of dusky pinks, deep purples and blues – and these colours became the inspiration for our whole house,' she says. 'I'm amused that the print is called *Train Tracks*, as it aptly portrays my life travelling to and from London to see Guy.'

For a couple of years, the artwork sat in Sam's Hove home while she and Guy renovated the London property. Although

the house had been extended, it was narrow and they wanted to maximise the space. The lower ground floor was a main focus, with no flow between the kitchen, dining room and family room. Sam got in touch with Woodmans Construction, who had worked on the couple's previous house projects.

'The team have always been faultless so there was no doubt we'd use them,' says Sam. The owner suggested contacting Granit Architecture for expert space-planning, and they advised knocking through walls and rotating the staircase to enlarge the kitchen. 'It was a fantastic solution,' says Sam. 'Now we walk down into the family room and see straight into the garden, with a glass balustrade making the space feel open.'

Granit's architects and interiors team also advised on the configuration and

## AN ELEGANT BLEND

Talented teamwork lies at the heart of Sam and Guy Dawson's beautifully updated home

FEATURE JANE CRITTENDEN | PHOTOGRAPHY JAMES FRENCH



## KITCHEN

Mid-grey painted base units are combined with softly textured wall cabinets for a chic, contemporary look. Bespoke Kitchen, River Woodwork. Brooklyn glass dome pendants, £109 each, Industville, have this look



## MASTER BEDROOM

The reupholstered chaise and headboard bring a singular statement pattern to this calming scheme. Headboard and chaise in Karoo in Indigo, £129m, Threads at Jane Clayton. Walls in Shadow White estate emulsion, £46.50 for 2.5L, Farrow & Ball



### DESIGN TIP 'Injecting flashes of print in a neutral scheme is a good introduction for the colour-shy'

design of the kitchen, a bespoke build by River Woodwork, and enlarged the master en suite with joinery custom designed and built to fit the space.

When it came to planning the decoration, Sam and Guy called on Ingrid Parnis of Equilibrio Interiors, a designer they knew from holidays in Portugal. 'I've always been drawn to colour and patterned fabrics, but with so much choice, I've played it safe,' says Sam. 'I'd seen Ingrid's approach in friends' holiday houses and love the way she uses bright tones to bring a space to life – it makes rooms feel fresh and light.'

Straight away, Sam showed the Bob Dylan print to Ingrid, who suggested a selection of contemporary print upholstery fabrics drawing on the purples and pinks in the picture. 'One of Ingrid's choices was the same fabric I had used for curtains before, but in a different colourway,'

explains Sam. 'I was delighted as it was clear that Ingrid was exactly on my wavelength.'

Design talks continued as the house was stripped back, and a friend suggested Sam contact Farrow & Ball colour consultant Joa Studholme to help choose paint shades. 'Joa has a brilliant eye for the nuance of colours,' says Sam. 'She looked at each room, the light and the fabrics and then put together a colour specification for the whole house.'

When Sam and Guy moved back into their home 18 months later, all the work was complete. 'Ingrid has a fantastic team who do everything, even hanging the curtains – it's all very seamless,' says Sam.

'The colours and furniture make this house feel so much more contemporary and more "like me" than any other place I've lived in,' she adds. 'Downstairs seems significantly bigger – some of our friends think we extended – but we're simply using every inch of space we already had.'



## SITTING ROOM

The rich colours in this artwork inspired the interior scheme. Train Tracks limited-edition print by Bob Dylan, from £15,850, Castle Fine Art



## BEDROOM

The darkest tone of the chevron stripe is echoed in the blind trim for a crisp, cohesive finish. Headboard in Scala in Charcoal, £46m, Romo. Crystal table lamp, £155, JR Lighting, is similar



## BATHROOM

This Moroccan-style blind fabric beautifully offsets the sculptural freestanding bath. Blind in Bella in Rose Indien, £102m, Manuel Canovas at Colefax and Fowler. Picasso bath, from £1,295, Lusso Stone, is a good match