

CONTEMPORARY
REMODEL

Let there be light

The Thurlows' creative layout rejig and new extension has maximised space and brightness in their London home

Words **JANE CRITTENDEN** Photography **ANDREW BEASLEY**
Project **GRANIT ARCHITECTURE + INTERIORS**

TERRACE TALK

Located near the Thames and with good transport links to the West End, Maggie and Alan Thurlow were content to improve rather than move from the Victorian terrace they bought in 1988. Having already extended and converted the loft, their focus was on replacing this extension, remodelling the open-plan ground floor and turning the basement into a laundry room. 'Quality of light was important,' explains Alan. 'The old utility and narrow doorway between the front and back restricted our garden views, while the low extension ceiling and structural pole in the middle of our kitchen-diner felt claustrophobic.'

Coming across Granit Architecture + Interiors in a local magazine, the couple were drawn to the company's approach to marrying contemporary design with period properties. 'We wanted to keep the L-shape layout of our old extension to preserve the sun in our courtyard,' says Maggie. 'We loved the different angles of glass in Granit's new design, and get wonderful light reflections throughout the year.' Another standout feature was the re-worked floor plan. 'The sliding partition between the living room and kitchen-diner is fantastic, while the new WC informs a new study area,' says Maggie. 'It's such a clever use

of space, and a design I've not seen in other houses on the street.'

BUILDING WOES

After quotes and due diligence with their contractor, the couple moved out and work began on the basement. But it quickly became apparent the firm had made a mistake with the underpinning, which slowed progress then stopped altogether nine months later as the company went into liquidation. Litigation and lockdown delayed appointing a new contractor, who only stayed for six months before leaving too. 'We got to the point of being exhausted rather than angry,' recalls Maggie. 'There was mostly decorating left to do, and trusted tradesman Patrick Savage, who we've known for 30 years, was brilliant in organising decorators to put right finishes that hadn't been followed in Granit's initial scheme. Interior design was an important reason for choosing them so we needed to persevere.'

INTERIOR DESIGN

Designer Vicki Wilson had solid ideas to balance neutrals and darks and advise on furniture and furnishings. 'Despite the problems during the build, we're thrilled with the outcome,' says Maggie. 'Living here is like being on holiday every day.'



The project details

MEET THE RENOVATORS

Maggie and Alan Thurlow, who are both retired, live in this four-bedroom Victorian terrace in south-west London

BUILD BRIEF

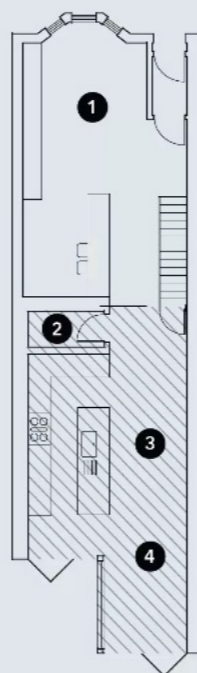
To redesign the existing rear extension and remodel the ground floor, including relocating the utility room to the basement, creating a visual connection to the garden, plus adding a WC and study area

TOTAL COST

Around **£330,000**

GROUND FLOOR

- 1 Living room
- 2 WC
- 3 Kitchen-diner
- 4 Seating area



UPDATED EXTERIOR

The glazing in the couple's replaced extension has been designed to track the sun throughout the day, with a pair of brise-soleils to protect from summer glare. Doors on three sides provide outdoor seating options, where Millboard's Lined Oak composite has been used for the decking

INDOOR-OUTDOOR OPTIONS

With a firm focus on improving the quality of light, Maggie and Alan wanted a staggered extension design to maximise views and enjoy the sun during the latter part of the day. The layout creates pleasant pockets of space for reading, working, cooking and eating



NEED-TO-KNOW:
Extension glazing

ORIENTATION

When planning your layout, remember that the sun is brightest and hottest from the south, while spaces used in the morning should face east, and west in the afternoons. North-facing light is best enjoyed from above or on larger plots where neighbouring properties are too far away to cast shadows. Combining glazing solutions on different elevations captures the sun as it moves around. 'The intensity and colour of natural light varies throughout the day so consider the function of the space,' advises Granit Architecture + Interiors' lead architect Tom Southall.

'Sunrise has cool tones and becomes deeper and richer at dusk.'

LIGHT MODELLING

Mark out the extension footprint and keep a log of where the light falls at key points of the day. Time permitting, see how this changes according to the season. 'Projects modelled in 3D using CAD capture the surrounding properties and trees that can overshadow the site, and track the sun's path to find appropriate glazing solutions and finishes,' explains Tom.

GLAZING SOLUTIONS

Sliding or bifold doors with a thin

frame maximise views, and a recessed threshold will be seamless to the garden. Overheating and glare can be resolved with angled glazing, sensor-automated blinds or solar-control glass. An external overhang or brise-soleil are good sun protectors yet allow winter light to penetrate when the sun's low. A toughened glass floor distributes vertical light, ideal for a basement, and privacy and light can be balanced with roof windows, or a high- or low-level horizontal window. 'Extending the floor plan can make the middle of the house dark,' says Tom. 'So a high-level clerestory window where the extension meets the house is a good solution.'

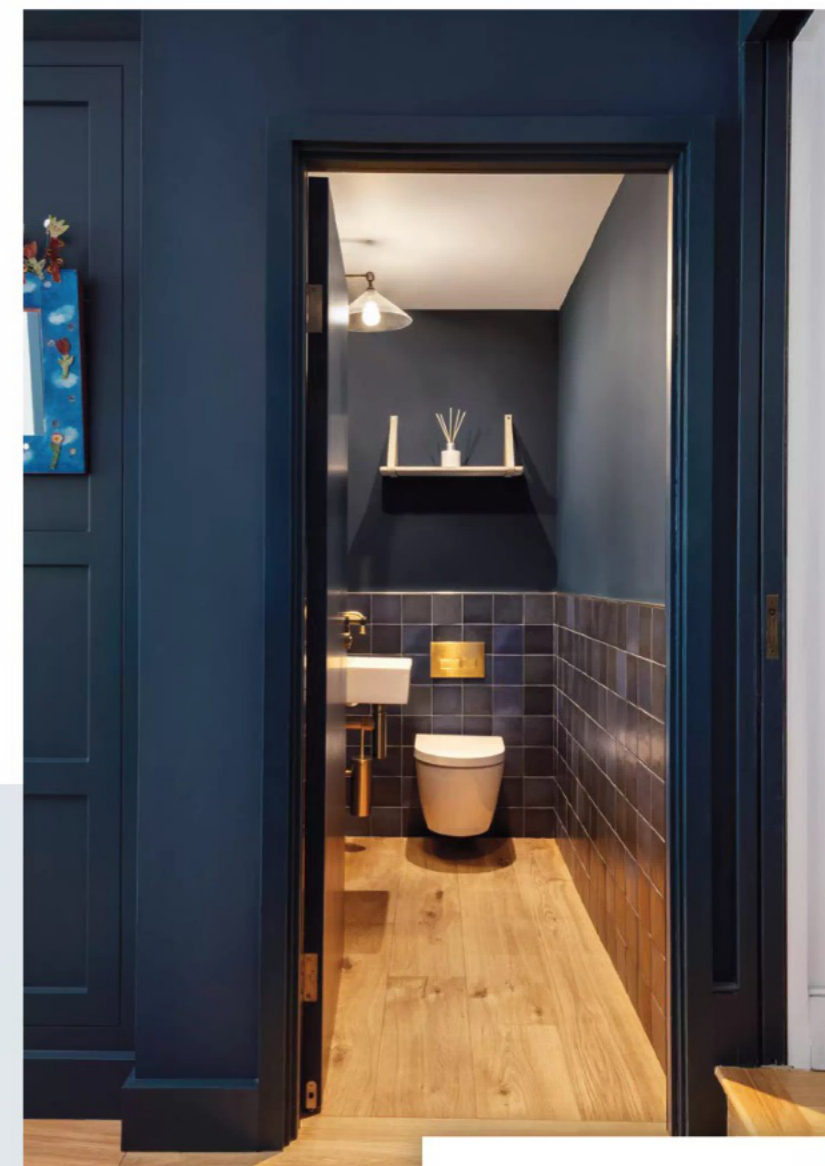
DEPTH OF DESIGN

Replacing the old extension allowed the floor levels to be dropped a further 10cm to give more volume and light to the room and a level connection with the garden. Angled glazing above the kitchen workspace creates ambient light

“ We love the different angles of glass in the new design, and now get wonderful reflections of light throughout the year ”

KITCHEN-DINER

With plenty of light in this west-facing space, Maggie and Alan were able to opt for Tom Howley's Lithadora, a rich dark blue tone with green undertones on the Kavanagh modern Shaker cupboards, finished with bronze wire scroll handles. Engineered oak flooring runs throughout and joinery is painted in Farrow & Ball's Hague Blue to match the cabinetry



↑ CREATIVE LAYOUT
Space from the previous kitchen has been used to form the new WC and recess for a pocket door

Key contacts
Kitchen cupboards, Tom Howley. Quartz worktops, Caesarstone. Appliances, Miele. Boiling-water tap, Quooker. Engineered oak flooring, Natural Wood Flooring Co. Bifold doors, 1st Folding Sliding Doors. Paint, Little Greene & Farrow & Ball. Dining table & chairs, Treske Artisan. Decking, Millboard

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