

'We've made style and function work'

Combining classic touches with practical materials and pops of vivid colour, Hannah and Paul Barratt have turned their house in East Sussex into a contemporary, family-friendly home

Words JANE CRITTENDEN Styling MARISHA TAYLOR Photographer JAMES FRENCH



Dining area The Original BTC's Titan size 3 pendant was carefully positioned above the Barker and Stonehouse Keeler dining table – and also works when the table is extended for entertaining. The splash of yellow here, in the Calvin armchair from Aitken & Thyme and in the Eames-inspired Eiffel DSW chairs from Dwell, lift the natural wood tones in the room

Kitchen The in-frame Shaker Cotswood kitchen from Crown Imperial has a dramatic navy finish to contrast with Minerva's white marble-effect solid-surface worktop, with appliances from Fisher & Paykel. Hannah brought the statement Joe bar stools from Habitat with them from their previous home



▲ *Design details* The butterfly picture by Terry Pastor from Art Republic prompted Hannah to choose yellow as an accent in the kitchen. The colour complements the use of wood and brass fixtures in the space, like the Flori pendants from Rowan & Wren



Step inside...

Meet the owners
Artist Hannah Barratt lives here with her husband Paul, managing director of Karndean Designflooring, and their children Samuel, 13, Max, 11, and Phoebe, 5

House details
A detached 1930s four-bedroom house in Hove, East Sussex

Facts & figures
The couple bought the property for £875,000 in 2016; it's now worth £1.1m

Harmonising great interiors with the practicalities of a young family is a balancing act that takes consideration, but Hannah Barratt has nailed it in her 1930s home with a robust palette of wood, marble and brass, teamed with pops of bold colour.

'We've got three children and with the whole house to update, I didn't want to be too precious about everything being new,' she explains. 'There were no remaining period features in the property so I took a modern approach, choosing contemporary shades and textiles, with materials that could withstand our busy family home.'

Years before Hannah and husband Paul bought the property and moved in with their young children, it had been extended on all sides, increasing the size of downstairs and drawing the original back window and door into the house. Hannah says it was this quirky feature that particularly appealed, and captured the essence of how they wanted to live as a family. 'We need space to be together but also to be in different rooms doing our own thing,' she says. 'So the window between the living room and the dining area keeps that visual connection even when the door's closed.'

Although the couple were delighted with the ready-made space, they were keen to decorate throughout, and tweak the downstairs. ▶

Living room The large Oscar corner sofa in Steel clever velvet from Loaf fills the spacious proportions of the room, and the wall behind, painted in Farrow & Ball's Peignoir, provides the perfect backdrop for the hummingbird artwork by Dave White from Art Republic. The Sweep Arc floor lamp and Orion side tables are from Made.com



‘Although our lives are busy, I wanted our home to feel calm, where we can relax’

Linking spaces The internal window and door once ran along the back wall of the house. The deep alcove was divided off to create bespoke shelving by Wood, Nail & I, painted in Farrow & Ball's Downpipe, and a hallway cloakroom cupboard behind



Hall The hall sets the tone for the rest of the house, with understated colour putting the focus on the Karndean Lime Washed Oak herringbone flooring, which looks as authentic as real wood



THE BIG IDEA

Hannah and Paul replaced glass and chrome bannisters with oak and painted wood, which are more in keeping with the age and style of the house. This is a relatively straightforward and inexpensive project, and a good staircase company or local joiner will be able to advise you on what options are available

▲ *Colour pop* Hannah used the pink shade of the Kubrick armchairs from Made.com as an accent in the living room, flanked by a floor lamp from West Elm



layout to suit their needs. Interestingly, the 1970s side extension to the living room almost made the room feel too big. 'This area needed a rethink as it looked disjointed and lacked a focal point,' Hannah explains. 'I found replacing two small sofas with one big corner design made all the difference, as well as adding oversized pieces like the artwork and floor lamp.'

Hannah and Paul also decided to convert the garage into a kids' den, and open up the kitchen and dining room, separated by an arch. At first they thought they might extend further. 'These two rooms felt dark and enclosed, but a friend pointed out that after we'd removed the adjoining wall and added sliding doors, the space would feel much bigger and brighter,' says Hannah. 'It was great advice as it's the best room in the house now.'

Work on the project was planned in three phases: soon after they moved in the couple decorated upstairs, and replaced the glass and chrome stair banister with painted wood and oak. Phase two started five months later when the garage was converted, which also gave the Barratts space to temporarily store their things during the kitchen-diner renovations that followed. Building firm Niche House, owned by a parent from school, carried out the building work. 'I wanted good quality finishes that would last, and I knew that the owner, Gary Stray, was really hot on detail,' says Hannah. 'The team did a great job.'

Since Paul works for Karndean Designflooring it was only natural the couple would choose a luxury vinyl floor from one of its ranges. Hannah loved the look of wood laid in a herringbone design, but without ▶

Master bedroom Warm teal walls in Farrow and Ball's Stone Blue and dark wood occasional furniture evoke a Mid-century feel in the couple's bedroom. The marble and brass pendant light is by Tom Dixon, and Hannah has added Aquilla sequinned cushions from Barker and Stonehouse for a touch of old Hollywood glamour



▲ *En suite* An antique-effect mirror from Cox & Cox overlooking the Glide II American walnut vanity from Bauhaus bring a touch of elegance to the new en suite, which has been simply tiled and painted in Farrow & Ball's Strong White



'We have space to be together or in different rooms without being completely shut away'

anything like this available. Paul had lime-washed oak planks cut to bespoke lengths to create the pattern. Now the product is a permanent fixture in the company's Knight tile range. 'We have an expanse of floor space downstairs so we needed to get the flooring right,' says Hannah. 'I wanted it to have interest and stay looking good over time. The vinyl is really hardwearing and I like that the herringbone is a modern interpretation of traditional parquet.'

A layered, warm grey colour scheme ties spaces together with textured materials of velvet, wood, brass and marble. Rooms also feature dark elements – the sofa, shelves, kitchen cupboards, walls – without being overwhelming. 'I like a mix of dark tones to pull out lighter shades, and then a pop of bright colour to give the spaces a contemporary twist,' Hannah explains.

In the kitchen, navy Shaker-style Crown Imperial cupboards are topped with a practical marble-effect Minerva worktop and brushed-brass ironmongery for a luxurious finish. An eye-catching canary yellow ►

Phoebe's bedroom. An extended cot bed with a light touch of pinks and yellows – like the string lighting from Cable & Cotton – make for a fuss-free girl's bedroom. The white shelving unit is from the Great Little Trading Company



STYLE STEAL

A decorative floor, whether tiles or vinyl, is a great way of adding colour and pattern in a functional space like a bathroom. While plain, neutral walls are a great way of making a small space feel larger, you can be more creative on the floor with a bold design to draw the eye – consider installing underfloor heating at the same time for warmth and comfort

◀ Bathroom

Hannah didn't plan to change the bathroom straightaway, but as the broken floor tiles needed replacing, she opted for a bespoke mosaic Karndeans floor, which has refreshed the grey wall tiles

ceiling pendant forms the centrepiece above the reclaimed wood dining table, matched in with Eames-inspired chairs. Upstairs, warm teal blue walls surround the master bedroom, paired with marble-topped Mid-century wood furniture, and marble and brass light fittings. 'I applied this palette throughout the house,' says Hannah. 'It's a simple and unfussy look that doesn't overload the rooms.'

Back in the living room, Hannah embraced the large dimensions with oversized lighting and furniture, shaping areas for storage, relaxing and TV viewing.

Pink tones draw the room together – two candy pink chairs by the window and a steel grey corner sofa dressed with pink, mustard and teal cushions. The last of the decorating was finished a year after they moved in – the garden revamp is to follow. For now, Hannah and Paul are very satisfied with what they've achieved.

'It looks good and functions really well on a practical level,' says Hannah. 'Having two big downstairs rooms and the kids' den gives us plenty of space to be together or apart. I still love coming home to this house, and hope I'll be doing so for years to come.' 🏡

Good choice



Pop light in New York yellow £60 Artifact Lighting



Flap large black year wall clock £150 Habitat



Imandra oak-effect vanity basin unit £150 B&Q



Hannah's

STYLE STEAL

Luxury touch



Karlsson big flip wall clock £206.99 Wayfair



Titan size 1 pendant in yellow £259 Original BTC



Kai X 800 double-drawer basin unit in Honey Walnut £450 Crosswater



Large vintage black Amish barn star £65 Ineko Home



Oversized industrial metal star £89.95 Nkuku



Kubrick wing back chair in Candy Pink £399 Made.com

Stonewashed Blue matt emulsion £29.16 per 2.5ltrs Dulux

Air Force Blue absolute matt emulsion £45 per 2.5ltrs Little Greene



Ludwig armchair in Rose easy velvet £679 Swoon



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