

# 'It's the first house that feels like home'

Leanne and Ash Baud grew in confidence with colour as they decorated their 1930s semi, achieving the perfect balance of dark and moody interiors and family practicality

Words JANE CRITTENDEN Styling MARISHA TAYLOR Photography ADAM SCOTT

**Dining room**  
The Iona ten-seater pine table from [Made.com](#) was the ideal investment piece for family meals and entertaining, the legs of which are a good match to the walls, decorated in Farrow & Ball's Down Pipe. Leanne then upcycled two of the charity-shop chairs in the same colour and waxed the third



## Step inside...

### Meet the owners

Leanne Baud, who works for the ambulance service, lives here with husband Ash, a gas engineer, their daughters Esmé, 3 and Ada, 1, and Leanne's sons from a previous marriage, Oliver, 16, and Mason, 14

### House details

A four-bedroom 1930s semi in Huddersfield, Yorkshire

### When they bought it

2016



### ← Sun room

Double doors open onto the outdoor terrace from this previously extended space, where Leanne has made her own updates, including reviving a tan leather chair her friend was throwing out, and painting the brown uPVC window frames in anthracite grey to tone in with the new scheme

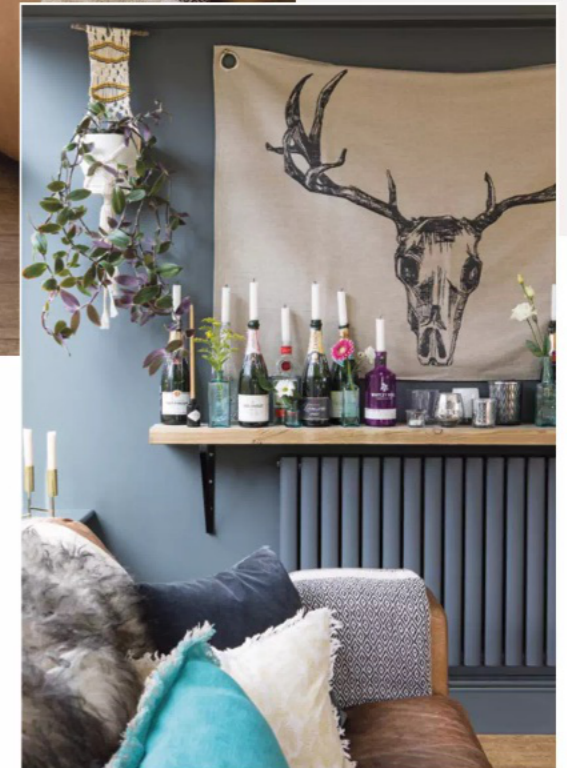
### ↓ Corner feature

Neutral accessories like the stag head wall hanging and macramé plant hanger add a rustic accent, while Leanne made the shelf from a scaffolding board and brackets from B&Q

**H**aving moved house five times in the last ten years, Leanne Baud is a self-confessed 'serial renovator'. This 1930s property, however, is a departure from her usual taste for period houses, and the move came about after her husband Ash encountered some practical problems while they were living in Leanne's previous two-bedroom cottage. 'Ash is 6ft 3, so struggled with the low beams, plus we also needed space to store all of his bikes,' explains Leanne. 'When we first viewed the house I was unsure about the bland rooms and lack of original features, but then we began to see the upsides. Although every room was crammed with furniture, there was lots of space as the property had already been extended to the side and back, and had a double garage.'

Initially Leanne planned for them to live in the house before doing any decorating to get a feel for the rooms. But soon after moving in, she got the itch to get going on the living room, and opened up the fireplace, installed a log burner and reinstated the picture rail and coving. 'We put the period features back in the kitchen, too, and throughout the house we stripped back to brick before decorating as the plasterwork was rough,' she says. 'We also removed the overboarding on the ceilings and gained an extra three or four inches in height.'

The couple bought a charcoal grey sofa and armchair before they moved in, excited to go darker with their interiors for a change of pace. 'In my previous cottage, and the barn conversion before that, the rooms lacked light so I decorated in neutrals in order to brighten them up.' →



↓ **Breakfast bar**

The couple brought the two parts of the extended kitchen together during the update by continuing the Apollo Slab Tech worktop around to create a breakfast bar. The industrial-style plate rack makes a useful place for storage and displaying Leanne's china collection

→ **Kitchen**

Choosing Wickes' Milton Midnight Shaker cabinetry was an easy decision thanks to its quality and price point, and Hafele D copper handles give it a bespoke finish. Mini Metro tiles from Walls and Floors and Abode's Pronteau three-in-one tap in Urban Copper complete the look



Leanne

“ I’ve used Farrow & Ball’s Cornforth White, Hague Blue and Down Pipe everywhere in different combinations ”



**Easy project**

For a simple way to give off-the-shelf cabinets a bespoke look, take Leanne's lead by adding your choice of knobs or handles and introducing other elements, such as freestanding pieces of furniture or decorative open shelving in contrasting materials

says Leanne. Here, I felt able to experiment with dark, dramatic colours schemes.'

She began decorating the living room cautiously at first, contrasting the dark upholstery with Farrow & Ball's Cornforth White on the walls, before venturing into deeper tones of Hague Blue and Down Pipe as she moved through the house. 'Cornforth White is in every room and a really versatile colour, as it can look cool and bright or warm and cosy, depending on the light,' says Leanne. 'Too many colours would have made the rooms

look disjointed, and I felt greys and blues are calming and sympathetic to the house. I used the three colours in different combinations and added touches of pink, gold and copper in my furnishings and accessories.'

It was in the couple's bedroom that Leanne tried out the darker blue first. 'I often do a 13-hour night shift, so good quality sleep is really important,' she explains. 'I was a bit nervous about the navy at first but it's turned out to be very restful, and more recently I've been inspired to decorate the rest of the room in the same colour.' →

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↑ **Design details**

To tone in with the flooring yet contrast with the dark painted units, Leanne and Ash chose Loaf's Bumble stools in Smoked Oak to accompany the new breakfast bar. For similar industrial-style pendant lighting, try the Flori glass brass pendant from Rowen & Wren

The bespoke vanity in the en suite is also painted in Hague Blue, where Leanne chose white metro shower tiles for a hint of the traditional – later repeating the look in the family bathroom and kitchen. Here, she surprised herself by choosing blue-black cabinets. 'I'd intended on having a light kitchen and painting the walls dark, but when I happened to see a door sample on the salesman's desk, I knew it was right straightaway,' she says.

It wasn't all plain sailing during the renovations, however, with poor water pressure leading to the couple discovering that the pipes and boiler needed replacing.

'We had to be quite careful with our money at times, but we've not sacrificed anything we've really wanted,' she says. 'It's just meant everything took longer while we saved up.'

Leanne was also savvy by looking for bargain buys online, such as daughter Esmé's 1930s wardrobe – a £30 Ebay find – which she painted in Farrow & Ball's Yellowcane. 'Upcycling secondhand pieces was a great option when I couldn't find exactly what I wanted, and it meant we could splash out on other things,' she says. 'We stretched our budget by keeping an eye on the sales, too – the Crittall-style shower screen popped up in a Black Friday deal.' →



↑ **Study area**

Leanne had the desk custom-made to her own design by Parker Howley & Co and constructed the shelf above with a waxed scaffold board and copper brackets for cohesion with the kitchen beyond. For a similar oversized wall clock, try the weathered wood cut-out design from Cox & Cox



Leanne

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**Living room**

Accessorised with pops of pink and gold, Loaf’s Crumpet sofa and armchair were a sale purchase before the couple moved in, and the starting point for the colour palette Leanne has used throughout. The Argyll Patriot carpet is from Feature Floors, and Leanne designed the Blue Bateig limestone fireplace herself before having it made by Easy Fireplace





**En suite →**

Floor-to-ceiling tiles frame the shower with a marble cut-off for the shelf insert, while Wickes' Winchester Patchwork grey ceramic floor tiles add interest underfoot

**← Main bedroom**

Pink and copper accents, including the bedside lamps and Orrico hammered side tables from Habitat, create a warm, cosy feel against the Hague Blue walls. The Waterlilies duvet cover is from FatFace, and a picture shelf makes a stylish statement above. 'All of our artwork has a story to tell, and I love to move them around,' says Leanne



**Budget buy**

Leanne gave her en suite a high-end look with inexpensive metro wall tiles, which have been elevated by using dark grey grouting. She spotted the decorative floor tiles in Wickes for a fraction of the price of other designer patterned styles



Leanne also saved with an ex-showroom bath and basin, meaning she could justify buying the mirrored wall. She went all-out with the decoration in this space, painting the walls and ceiling in Farrow & Ball's Down Pipe. Inspired by the moody look, she used the same colour to update the sun room and made use of the leftover yellow paint from Esmé's wardrobe to paint the piano. 'By the time I got to this point in the project, I was

willing to give anything a go,' she says. 'After all, it's only paint, and very easy to change.'

In a busy house with four children, the family needed plenty of storage, and furniture that was versatile and hardwearing, so the sofa and armchair are made with long-lasting oak frames and upholstered in a wipeable velvet fabric. An oak dining table with a mix of chairs and a bench means plenty of space when the kids have their →

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**Esmé's room** 'Pale pink and bright yellow are a surprisingly good combination and makes Esmé's room look bright and cheerful,' says Leanne, who used Farrow & Ball's Yellowcake to upcycle the wardrobe, with Valspar's Scented Soap on the walls. The felt elephant head is from Trouva and the Cotton ball lights are by Cable & Cotton



friends over for tea. A bespoke breakfast bar in the kitchen has space to seat four, ideal for the boys' homework, Ash's paperwork and Esmé's colouring – all at the same time.

The couple are currently busy finishing off their latest projects – a loft conversion and a porch – and feel very settled. 'I've never lived anywhere for longer than two years, or been attached to a house like I have this one,' says Leanne. 'It's the only one that has really felt like home. I'm so pleased with the balance of colour – we've got both brave rooms and calming spaces, and I love how the house works for us all.' ☺



Leanne

“Upcycling secondhand pieces helped when I couldn't find what I wanted, and meant we could splash out on other items” ”

**Mason's room** → Using Tanlay Red Brick-effect wallpaper from B&Q as a feature wall in her youngest son Mason's room, Leanne painted both the walls and joinery in Farrow & Ball's Down Pipe, which has streamlined the space

