

Living room 'We've woven pink and blue tones throughout the house to tie the rooms together,' says Shauna. The Mid-century-style sofa makes a striking centrepiece, complemented by the Där chandelier from Mrs Robinson and coffee table from Ebay

Every room has its own personality

A complete renovation of their dream Victorian house has allowed Shauna O'Handley and husband Adam to streamline the layout and create a fresh and cohesive colour scheme

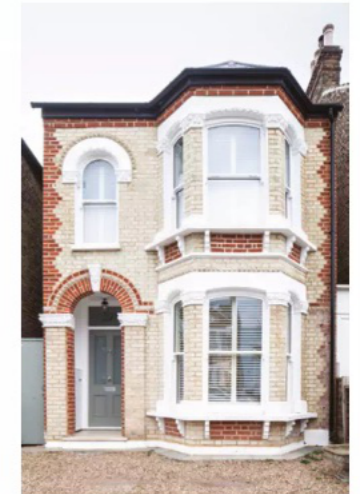
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▲ *Unique pieces* The vibrant Victoria Kiff painting is from The Dulwich Artists' Open House. 'You can't go far in this house without finding something we've bought locally,' says Shauna

Tackling a Victorian house renovation was something that native Canadians Shauna O'Handley and her husband Adam had always hankered after, and what pushed them to sell their London self-build to start another project. 'Where we're from, on Cape Breton Island, you don't see this type of period property, and we love the romance of the architecture,' explains Shauna. 'We were keen to put the shine back into an old house, with rooms that flowed, yet each with its own identity and a calm colour scheme.'

It was Adam who viewed the house first, noting the scope to convert the loft, and the sizeable ground floor. However, while extensions into the side return and at the rear – with a conservatory tagged on the back – offered ample space, the construction of the add-ons was poor, and Adam could see the benefit in rebuilding them. 'There ►



Step inside...

Meet the owners
Shauna O'Handley, an HR executive, lives here with husband Adam Glabay, a software engineer-turned-property developer

House details
A Victorian link-detached property in East Dulwich, south London

Facts & figures
The couple bought the house for £850,000 in October 2015, and it's now worth around £1.3m

◀ *Personal touch* Shauna had the woodburner surround made to her own design, hanging one of her favourite paintings – a Judith Bridgland piece from Bay Attic – above. 'We only choose art that resonates with us,' she says. 'I love the colour and depth of the oils here in the rural setting'

▼ *Sitting comfortably* The new rooflight draws natural light down into the kitchen, and the couple have arranged their two Pieff chrome and leather lounge chairs from Pamono below - creating a great spot opposite the island to sit and socialise while one of them is cooking



was nothing original and Victorian left in the house,' recalls Shauna. 'The bowed upstairs floorboards felt like we were walking uphill, and the brickwork needed repointing. So we knew it would be a huge project.'

The couple rented a flat nearby and began gutting the house while they waited for planning permission to rebuild the back, concentrating first on reinstating the period features: adding coving to the combined reception rooms, replacing fireplaces, and installing a traditional-style staircase over three floors and into a new loft room. Shauna was particularly disappointed by the uPVC windows: 'I've been dreaming about living in a house with sash windows for years, and I felt that >



Kitchen Traditional Shaker cabinets from Piqui, complete with brass handles and knobs from Dowsing & Reynolds, are painted in Farrow & Ball's Oval Room Blue. White ash wood flooring runs vertically throughout the downstairs area, elongating the space

Living area 'The extension is where we chill out and spend most of our time,' says Shauna. The couple already owned the Vittorio sofa from [Made.com](#), and they had the yellow rug made from a piece of carpet roll



'We love the romance of old architecture and were keen to put the shine back into this Victorian house'



Dining area Shauna was drawn to the bold colours in the Mid-century Polish Cyrk posters, which pop against the neutral backdrop. The brass dining table from Mink Interiors is complemented by Beckett garden chairs from Maisons du Monde



◀ *Hallway* 'One of the hardest decisions was finding a wallpaper that wouldn't look too traditional or too floral,' says Shauna. 'We liked the simplicity of this Matthew Williamson Rosanna Trellis design from John Lewis & Partners, and knew we could build a decorating scheme for the rest of the house from it.' The trim on the sisal stair runner is a subtle nod to the blue kitchen

THE BIG IDEA

Choose a runner to protect the treads and risers from wear and tear on a painted staircase. A runner will also muffle the sound of footsteps and add the finishing touch to a hallway scheme. Some companies offer designs in standard widths, but you can also have them made to order, adding decorative elements such as colourful edging or metal stair rods

reinstating them was what this house deserved,' she says. 'The new staircase looks beautiful too, and it ties our loft into the rest of the house, so it feels like it's always been here.'

The builders had their work cut out for them as Shauna and Adam laid out their plans to improve the space. Switching the bathroom to the other side of the landing opened up the sightline to the garden from the master bedroom; moving a wall in the second bedroom increased the landing space to the loft; and some of the room heights were changed as

well. 'We lowered the floor in the living rooms with high ceilings by six inches in order to balance the head height lost in the main bedroom above, due to the new loft,' Shauna explains. 'So when we replaced the skirting boards, we made sure they were scaled to the different room heights.'

The couple also looked at ways to sneak in storage. 'Houses are big in Canada, so there's never an issue with this,' says Shauna. 'I don't know where the Victorians put all their stuff! We built an understairs cupboard and storage for shoes ▶

Design details The blue-grey pattern of Ralph Lauren's Egarton Plaid wallpaper fits with the couple's colour palette, 'and, at the same time, has texture and depth that gives the room its own relaxing identity,' says Shauna. The large Victorian chest of drawers is from Crystal Palace Antiques



where the toilet cistern once was; plus, we've managed to squeeze in a linen cupboard behind the bath.'

When planning the interiors, the couple focused on the fixtures first, creating cohesion to anchor the house. Doors and their hardware are the same throughout, all the cupboards built by a joiner are similar, with the joinery painted in Farrow & Ball's Pointing. A white-washed wood floor denotes the main living spaces and links with a sisal stair runner, which in turn connects to sisal carpets on the upper floors. 'Creating a foundation and fluid transition between rooms was fairly straightforward,' says Shauna. 'The challenge was

making sure every room didn't look the same. We wanted everywhere to feel calm but not minimalist, nor allow our colourful, eclectic furniture to takeover.'

'The subtle floral wallpaper, which runs up both stairwells, became part of the solution, inspiring the blues and pinks throughout the house.' They became major and minor colours depending on the room,' Shauna explains. 'Pink is more notable in the living rooms and we chose blue-painted cabinetry for the kitchen, making sure both shades are included so the transitions are seamless.'

In the dual living room, teal Mid-century chairs brush up against a new blush pink sofa, pulled together with a ▶



Main bedroom Shauna has painted the door and wardrobes in Farrow & Ball's Old White to complement the room's blue-toned theme. The Kristoff bed from Swoon is illuminated by Atelier Grade wall lights from Astro, perfect for bedtime reading





▲ *Guest bedroom*

The couple chose Farrow & Ball's muted period shade Cromarty on the walls, before adding a few bolder touches with a yellow Lucia bed from Habitat and floral cushions

splash of multicolour in the rug and throw. 'The style of the Shaker kitchen acknowledges the old, but is painted in a striking modern blue, which makes it a comfortable fit with the architecture of the new extension. Upstairs follows a similar pattern: bedrooms are decorated in soothing shades of blue – and then the twin-colour scheme is turned up a notch. 'The pink-red artwork and a turquoise blue cupboard in the bathroom are a clash that we really love! Although Adam's kitchen island design with the seating opposite is actually my favourite spot in the house.'

Art and mementos complete the house, connecting the couple with a place, person or feeling that marks a point in time. 'In the hall, the pastel painting of an apple orchard in Nova Scotia reminds us of home,' Shauna says. 'I've also hung my late mum's scarf on a hook here, so it's always the first thing I see when I come home.'

▼ *Bathroom* 'A friend created the *Psycho* movie print for us, to offset the turquoise console,' says Shauna. 'It injects a bit of cheeky fun into the room'

