



**SITTING ROOM**  
 Colour with minimal pattern highlights the ornate period details. Walls in Dorchester Pink, Little Greene. Madrid coffee table, Bo Concept. Bay Lighting Tosca ceiling light, John Lewis. Jonathan Adler rug, Ruggable. Find *The Dream* print by Hanna Peterson at The Poster Club. Zelij Aqua Blue tiles, Artisan Tile Company

# Tradition with a twist

*Unsure how to blend their love of colour while respecting their home's past, Sarah and David Bradford sought advice from an interior designer who helped them revitalise the property*

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**HOME TRUTHS**  
**THE PROPERTY**  
 Grade II-listed Georgian townhouse  
**ROOMS** Sitting room, kitchen-diner, utility room, boot room, cloakroom, four bedrooms, two bathrooms  
**LOCATION**  
 Kent

## KITCHEN

'Red cupboards work because the warm tone connects with the stripped wood floor and earthy hues around the house,' says Sarah. 'Brass fittings have the same warmth and dark green accents tie in with the boot room across the hall.'

Units in Terre D'Egypte, Farrow & Ball. Elm cup handles, Corston. Try Parquet Pie table; Pitstop chairs, Loaf. Rock Pool Dance print by Moira Frith (above sink), available at The Old School Gallery

'We looked across all the mood boards to balance earthy and bold and check that tones flowed and complemented the period details'



Sarah and David Bradford decided to relocate from Suffolk to Canterbury with their children, Archie, 15 and Ethan, 13, after being drawn to its young, vibrant atmosphere and good schools. They were looking for another project and instantly connected with a Georgian home that hadn't been decorated since the 1980s.

'We loved the first floor sitting room with its original panelled ceiling and French doors leading to a balcony,' says Sarah. 'We wanted to preserve the property's character and charm – but I love bright colour, too. Our challenge was to find a cohesive scheme that would enhance but not dominate our home.'

Although the house had plenty of space, it wasn't the right space. There were two large sitting rooms, a small kitchen with separate dining room, five bedrooms, but no en suite. 'After turning one of the bathrooms into our son's bedroom, we didn't know what to do next,' says Sarah. 'We wanted a bigger kitchen and main bedroom but with busy jobs and family life, we decided to seek expert advice.'

Sarah found local interior designer Michelle Shakallis, who suggested relocating the kitchen to the ground floor sitting room and using the space as a utility and boot room instead. She also proposed knocking through two bedrooms on the top floor to create a main bedroom suite.

Since the house is Grade II-listed, the couple hired a heritage consultant to handle their listed buildings consent application and appointed a builder. Meanwhile, Sarah and Michelle continued to work on the interiors. Sarah says she was inspired by the Amsterdam home of actors



**LANDING**  
Curved detailing in the joinery adds a personal touch and reflects the home's period archways. Joinery and walls in Dead Salmon, Farrow & Ball. Balustrade in a similar tone to Pink 12, Lick. Find a similar Moroccan Berber Boucherouite rug on Etsy

**UTILITY ROOM**  
Tongue-and-groove cupboards echo the original panelled ceiling. An open shelf provides a place to display decorative items. Walls in Marble V, Paint & Paper Library. Brooklyn Balloon cage wall light, Industville, is similar



**MAIN BEDROOM**  
The bank of wardrobes behind the wall provides plenty of storage and sound insulation against the house next door. Walls in Tea Rose, Atelier Ellis. Paoletti Filagree velvet cushion, La Redoute. Find a print of Egon Schiele's *Lovers*, 1909, at

Posterlounge. Lois opal glass pendant, Spark & Bell  
**BATHROOM**  
'Bright yellow creates a sense of fun,' says Sarah. Panelling in Hoppers Hat, Fired Earth. Hudson Reed oval basin, Tap Warehouse, is similar. Try armed double globe wall sconce, Litfad

Carice van Houten and Guy Pearce. 'I was drawn to their joyful mix of pattern, cool furniture design and colour-blocking. However, I was a little nervous to go too far as David and I also needed interiors we could comfortably live with that wouldn't compete with the heritage details.'

Michelle responded with mood boards showing a vibrant living room and a colour-pop kitchen. She added playful touches with a chartreuse bathroom radiator and marigold shelves in a dark green boot room with wallpaper. The latter was a gamble as Sarah had asked for taupe decor. 'Michelle showed me two versions of the boot room,' says Sarah. 'The green wallpaper was one I'd saved on Pinterest and looked fun. I loved that she knew I would prefer the colourful option once I saw the visual.'

To balance the bright decor, Michelle underlined it with contrasting earthy neutrals. She colour-drenched with warm tones to enhance period panelling and architraves. Elsewhere, the original floorboards were sanded and stained, while rugs, heritage lighting and textured velvets are a nod to the past. Furniture is a mix of mid-century, rustic and contemporary looks, along with new joinery designed by Michelle and built by her team.

'Our home is fun, inviting and exactly our style,' says Sarah. 'But at the same time, it still has the character of the lovely period details. Michelle encouraged us to be braver than we've ever been with our interiors and the risk has absolutely paid off.' 🍷

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