

HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY
Victorian terrace

ROOMS
Sitting room, kitchen-diner,
cloakroom, five bedrooms,
two bathrooms

LOCATION
Southwest London

KITCHEN

'We gave the space a facelift by painting the cupboards a dark blue, changing the handles and adding lighting,' says Polly.

Cabinetry in Hague Blue, Farrow & Ball. Brooklyn Glass Dome pendant lights are similar, Industville

KEEP CALM

It may be a busy family home, but this Victorian terrace always feels relaxed thanks to a palette of neutrals and blues and clever storage – designer Polly Ashman tells all

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SITTING ROOM
 'My client loves the serene decoration in this adults' space,' says Polly. 'The pink chair is a favourite.' Chair in Pink Wicker, Fermoie. Patterned cushion in Panthera (opposite), Colefax and Fowler. Embroidered cushion, Oka. Wall light, Jim Lawrence. Art, client's own



WHAT DREW THE HOMEOWNERS TO WORKING WITH YOU? Like many of my clients, the couple are busy people with full-time jobs and a young family and they came to me through friends of friends. They bought the house already extended, so we didn't need to do any structural work, but it lacked personality. I like to give family homes a stylish yet 'lived-in' look, which I create by layering colour, patterns and texture. These homes also need good storage and lighting
WHAT WAS THEIR BRIEF? Since my client travels a lot with work, she wanted

'Storage was fitted even in tight spaces like the small alcove in the nursery'

to come into a calm, relaxing home and was drawn to a neutral scheme. We dialled this up in the designated adults spaces, like the front sitting room and their main bedroom, and as she likes blue we used varying tones in every room. Having a colour thread running through the house makes it feel cohesive.
HOW DID YOU APPROACH STORAGE AND LIGHTING? With a comfortable, restful environment in my client's mind, the house needed cupboards to hide away the toys and clutter of the day. She likes a tailored look so we designed Shaker-style joinery in nearly every room. The glare from spotlights is draining so we layered lighting with ceiling pendants, wall lights and lamps for a more comfortable, diffused effect.



NURSERY
 Panelling adds definition to the room, while wall lights pick out the blue in the joinery. Walls in Portland Stone Light, Little Greene. Anglepoise Original 1227 wall light, Utility Design. Curtains in Cupid in Antique Blue, Chelsea Textiles. Joinery in De Nimes, Farrow & Ball



MAIN BEDROOM
‘Painting the joinery the same colour as the walls keeps the look uncluttered,’ says Polly. Joinery in Light Blue, Farrow & Ball. Armchair upholstered in Pumori fabric in Azure, George Spencer Designs. Artwork client’s own



DID YOU MAKE ANY BIG CHANGES? We put back reclaimed fireplaces into the sitting room and main bedroom. The bathrooms needed gutting but the kitchen was in good condition so there was no point in ripping it out and starting again. We always encourage our clients to repurpose where they can – we kept the clients’ vintage rattan bed and reupholstered her grandmother’s antique stool and a chair.
HOW DID YOU CHOOSE THE FABRICS? We added colour and pattern to the neutral decor with window dressings, lampshades, cushions and upholstery in

‘A work desk with a drawer means you can clear the top of the desk at the end of the day’

fabrics from designers such as George Spencer Designs, Fermoie and Colefax and Fowler. The client likes geometrics, stripes and modern florals. For balance, I mix a bold print – like a blind – with smaller patterned fabrics. I also mix textures, such as the velvet and linen cushions in the sitting room.

WHAT WERE THE FINAL TOUCHES? For some clients it can be hard to visualise the end result so it’s important to trust the process – single items look very different as a collective in a finished room! My client has a wonderful eye and has some lovely ceramics and coffee table books from her travels. She was a joy to work with, this project was a real pleasure to do. 
pollyashman.com



BEDROOM
A vibrant blind fabric continues the blue tone that weaves throughout the house. Esther Teal Roman blind, Graham & Brown, is an alternative. Framed prints, client’s own. Stool upholstered in Rabanna L-264, Fermoie

MAIN BATHROOM
‘Neutral tones, warm wood and textured brass balance out the bold blue shower,’ says Polly. Alsace Scallop honed marble splashback tiles, Mandarin Stone. MPRO towel radiator, Crosswater