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September
2020
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Outside the box

An extended Victorian terrace has been designed to adapt to one young family's future needs

WORDS AMY FREARSON PHOTOGRAPHY MARIELL LIND HANSEN AND JULIET MURPHY



LEFT The extension's Petersen Tegl bricks are paler than the original London stock bricks, but lime-mortar pointing ties the two together

RIGHT All the new windows in the extension were made in oak



IN BRIEF

LOCATION Stoke Newington, London
TYPE OF PROPERTY Victorian terrace
BEDROOMS 4
PROJECT STARTED October 2018
PROJECT FINISHED May 2019
SIZE 123sqm
BUILD COST £95,000
CURRENT VALUE £1.2 million

Architects Ross and Emma Perkin had already designed an extension for their new house in Stoke Newington, London, before moving in back in 2017, but didn't start the work straight away. After a few months of living in the Victorian terrace, they realised they had got the design completely wrong.

Their original concept for a full-width, single-storey extension at the rear to maximise space on the ground floor meant that part of the house would not have received much natural light. By swapping this design for a two-storey addition, the

couple created extra living space as well as squeezing in an extra bedroom, while allowing light into the centre of the house. Two-storey extensions are not always permitted on Victorian terraces but this one was allowed because it faces an apartment block rather than overlooking another house. 'It was a useful lesson,' says Ross. 'People are often keen to crack on as soon as they buy, but living somewhere for a while allows you to figure out where the light is and where you want to spend time.'

Ross, 37, and Emma, 38, run their own practice, Emil Eve Architects, and have »



LEFT Floor-to-ceiling glazing wraps an inverted corner, but thanks to a clever custom-made system, panels slide open on both sides to allow the space to merge with the patio garden

RIGHT An oak window seat has been added to this corner, offering a spot to relax and enjoy the garden



two young children, Jess, five, and Tom, three. They have lived in the neighbourhood for several years and loved their previous flat, but it just wasn't big enough for a family. Their goal was to create a home with plenty of space, as well as adaptability for when their circumstances change, so they won't have to move again.

Like many London townhouses, the property had a split-level layout, but it felt disjointed. 'It was a real puzzle, with a living room and bedroom on the ground floor and a kitchen in a semi-basement at the front,' Ross reveals. 'Upstairs there were two bedrooms and a bathroom.'

The renovation relocated the kitchen up to the ground floor, where it now opens out onto a patio and small garden. Thanks to the new addition, this room is L-shaped rather than rectangular, which neatly divides it into two spaces: one for cooking and one for eating in. Floor-to-ceiling windows surround the inverted, south-facing corner, bringing sunlight into both areas and directing views towards trees, rather than

their three-storey neighbour. 'With the garden wrapping around, the room never feels small,' explains Ross, 'and when you open the corner up you have one big space.'

With the kitchen now on the ground floor, the basement has been turned into a self-contained studio flat with its own entrance, bathroom and kitchenette, giving the couple the adaptability they were after. A great space for guests to stay in, the flat could be home for an elderly member of the family or one of the children in the future. Meanwhile, there is always the option to rent it out to bring in extra income.

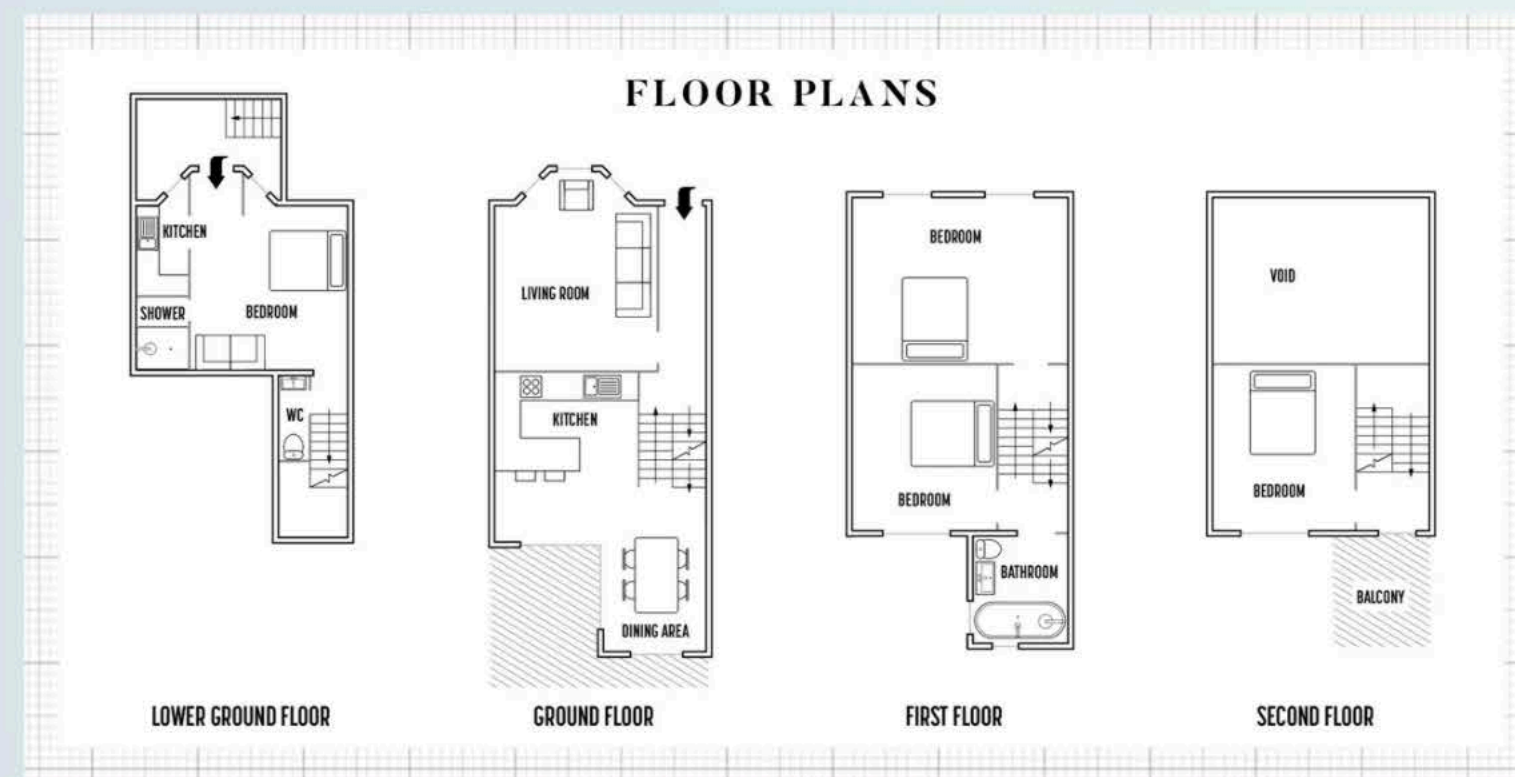
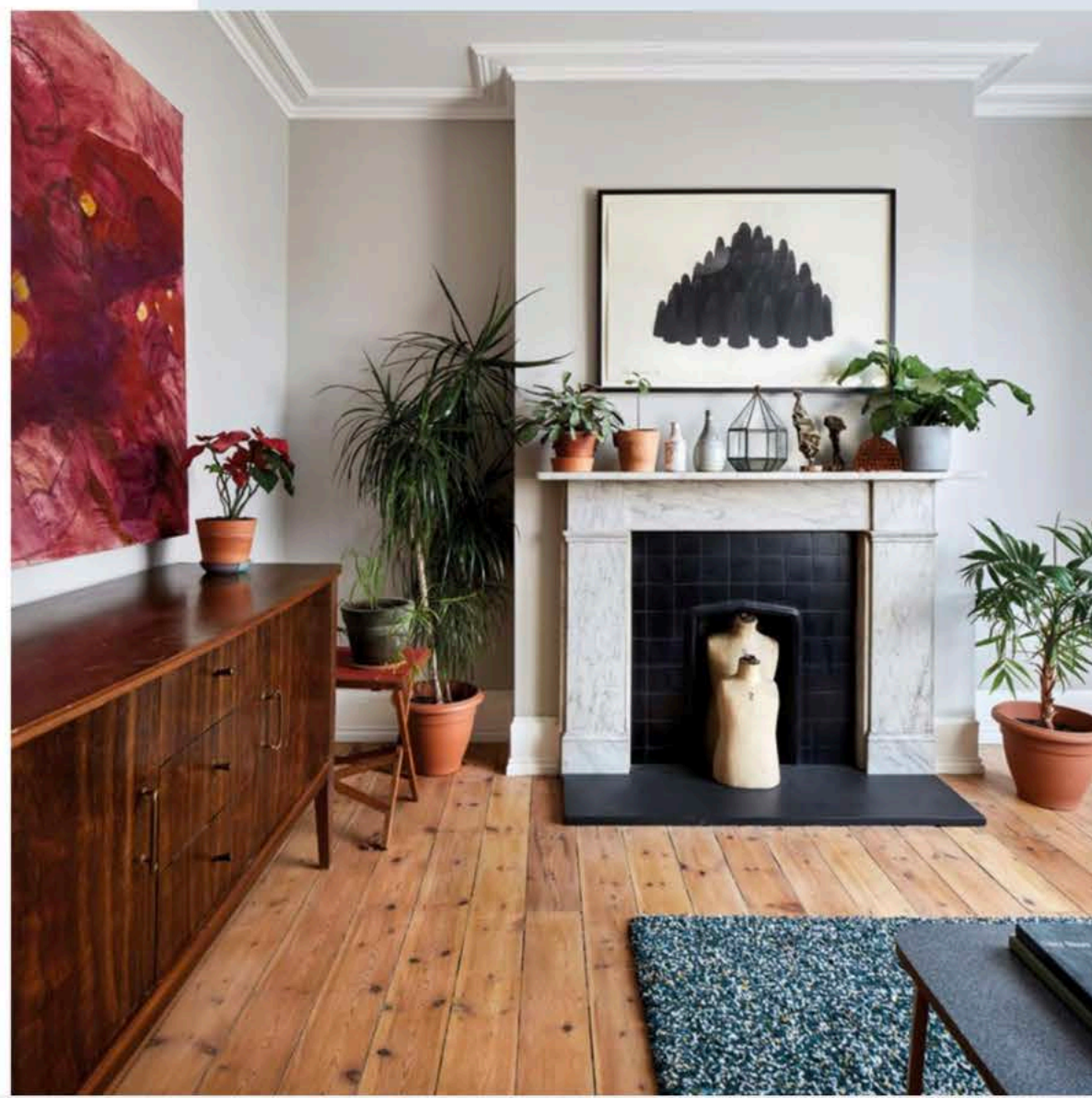
Recently, due to the coronavirus crisis, it has been used by the family as a home classroom. 'We often talk to our clients about how their needs might change over time,' explains Ross. 'A lot of people don't want to think about it, but it's important to consider how to live differently if the need arises.'

On the first floor, the extension includes a family bathroom, freeing up space for a fourth bedroom. There's also a small terrace on the level above. 'It's a »

'Living somewhere for a while allows you to figure out where the light is and where you want to hang out'

RIGHT An artwork by David Nash draws attention to the living-room fireplace, along with a set of two dressmaker's dummies

FAR RIGHT The living room was largely unchanged in the refurbishment, with the furniture pieces all from their previous flat



really nice spot because it gets the morning light,' says Ross.

The couple chose a Danish brick for the new-build, which they also used for the patio and garden walls. It is paler in colour than the London stock brick of the main house, but has a similar handmade texture, as the material is struck with water while being made. Ross, who is also a certified conservation architect, convinced the

builders to use lime mortar for the pointing, just as the Victorians did, instead of the more commonly used Portland cement.

Ross's passion for materials and craftsmanship developed at an early age. His father is a carpenter, and as he has plenty of experience in a workshop, he decided to make the majority of the joinery. The kitchen island with in-built storage, a window seat and shelving in the bathroom

'We often talk to clients about how their needs might change over time. A lot don't want to think about it'

and dining area are all oak. The shelves are filled with arrangements of plants, books and ceramics. 'I made them, but Emma is better at creating the displays,' says Ross.

The couple stopped short at making their own windows, choosing bespoke designs that allowed them to match the proportions of the original glazing and create patio doors that open at the centre, despite the right-angled bend. The interiors are decorated in

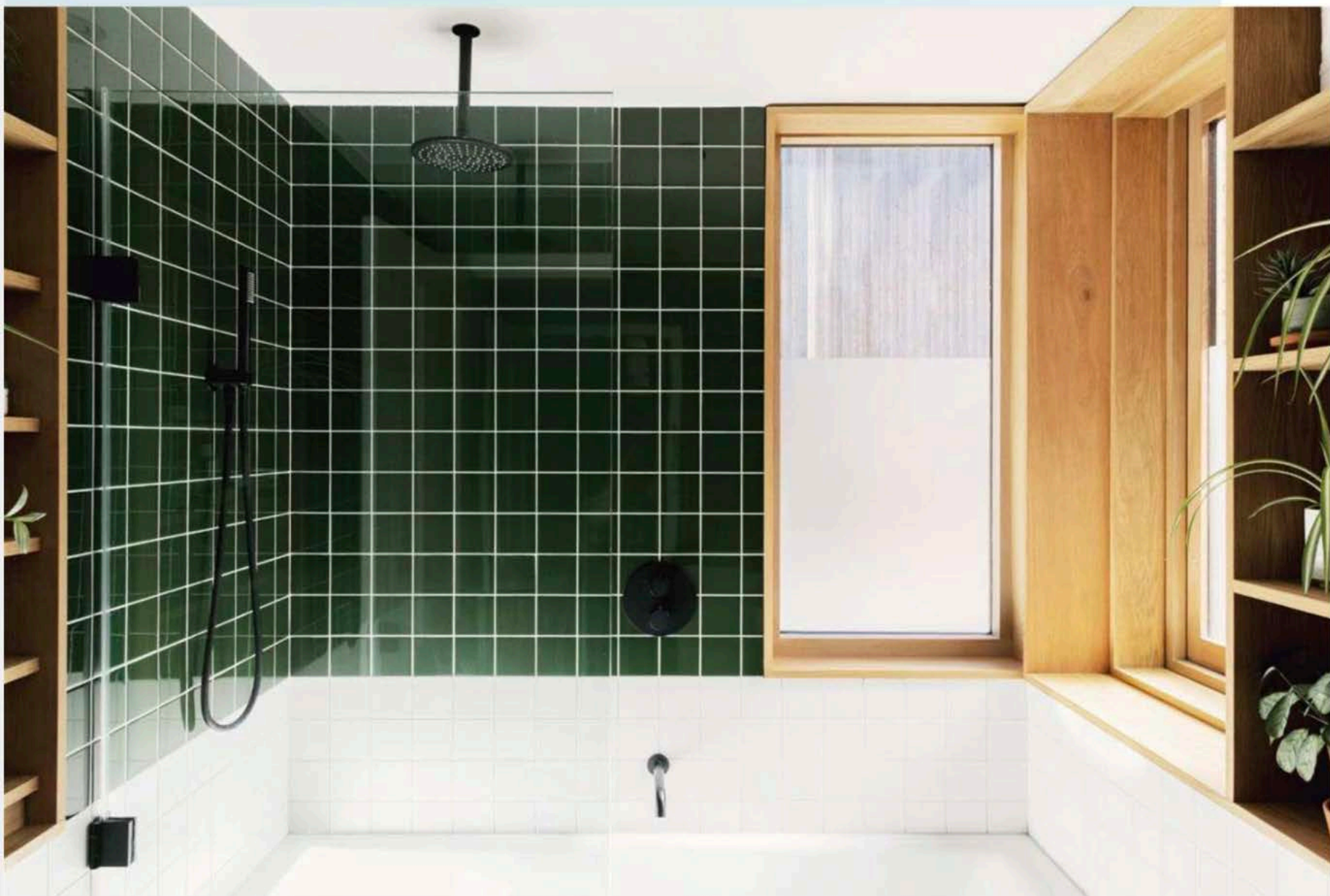
a rich palette of colours to complement the warm tones of oak, and a painting by Irish artist Ben Crawford, who Ross went to school with, inspired the perfect shade of royal blue for the kitchen. This handcrafted attention to detail gives it a unique character that belies the relatively modest cost of the project. 'The word bespoke can seem scary,' says Ross. 'But sometimes it can be a more cost-effective way to get what you want.' GD



ABOVE Paintings in the main bedroom are by Emma's mum, Sally Graham

RIGHT The self-contained studio flat is a future-proof space that has its own entrance, bedroom, bathroom and kitchen





ABOVE AND RIGHT
Bespoke shelves,
made by Ross,
were designed to match the
new oak windows



SUPPLIERS

PROJECT TEAM

Architect Emil Eve Architects (emileve.co.uk)

Structural engineer Atlam (07388 429 479)

Main contractor County Construction (countyconst.co.uk)

STRUCTURE

Windows and doors Jonathan Read (01728 723 647)

Bricks Petersen Tegl (petersen-tegl.dk)

FIXTURES & FITTINGS

Kitchen doors Valchromat (valchromat.pt)

Worksurface GEC Anderson (gecanderson.co.uk)

Sanitaryware EC1 Bathrooms (ec1bathrooms.co.uk)

Ceramic tiles Johnson Tiles (johnson-tiles.com)

Lighting Tala (tala.co.uk), Viobizzuno (viobizzuno.com)

FURNITURE & ACCESSORIES

Artwork Ben Crawford (bencrawfordart.com), Molly Martin (mollymartin.org), Nigel Peake (nigelpcake.com), Rebecca Wilson (rebeccawilson.co.uk)