

Stepping UP

Two new feature staircases link the levels of Marie-Eve Poget and Richard Jones' end-terrace house, which has been extended outwards and upwards with dramatic effect

Words Debbie Jeffery Photography Richard Chivers

Glazed doors and a large roof light make the extended kitchen-diner into a bright, family friendly space

AT A GLANCE

Names Richard Jones and Marie-Eve Poget
Ages 36 and 33
Location West London
Property End-of-terrace Victorian house
Bedrooms 2 **Bathrooms** 1
Project started August 2014
Project finished December 2014
Size of house 110sqm including loft office
House cost £860,000 in 2014
Build cost Around £200,000
Cost per sqm £1,880
Current value £1.3million



While we were living in a very small studio flat in Bayswater we had been scrimping and saving to buy a larger home with its own front door, some outside space and a second bedroom,’ says Richard Jones. He and his partner, Marie-Eve Poget, were drawn to the community spirit, local amenities and attractive Victorian and Georgian houses of Brackenbury Village – a residential district of west London designated as a conservation area next to Ravenscourt Park and near the Thames.

‘To be part of a community where everyone talks to one another was important,’ he continues. ‘At first we thought the houses would be out of our price range, and were rudely rebuffed by some local agents, but we focused hard on the area and eventually found this end-of-terrace house on my birthday in February 2014.’

Richard and Marie-Eve were the only people to make an offer on the two-storey Victorian house, which was dark, damp and uninviting at the time. The ground floor was split into a front living room and a kitchen-diner, plus a single-storey WC at the rear, with two bedrooms and a bathroom upstairs.

‘One surveyor wrote a long, depressing report detailing all the problems and advising it would be better to demolish and rebuild,’ says Richard, who had never previously bought a property. ‘Two walls were bowing following a fire and there was damp, rot and beetle infestation. A builder friend explained that we would have to gut the building completely before making it habitable, which was quite daunting.’

Marie-Eve and Richard knew that they would need a talented architect to lead them through the potential minefield ahead. ‘I Google-stalked every architect within about a two-mile radius, visiting around 100 websites,’ says Richard, ‘until an excellent local estate agent, Philip Wooller, introduced me to Sam Tisdall. We loved his portfolio; he was enthusiastic and immediately understood what we needed.’

The hipped roof of the property meant that the existing loft space was too small for a traditional conversion, but Richard was keen to use all the available space and so Tisdall devised a mezzanine-style office platform, which could also double as a guest room.

On the ground floor, the rear WC was to be demolished and replaced with a generous single-storey dining/family room extension, connected to the existing kitchen, and with glazed doors leading to the garden.

‘The design brought light into the house and gave us everything we needed in such a clever way,’ says Richard. ‘Our garden was quite small, so we wanted to conserve as much of it as possible; the extension was designed so that we would still have somewhere to sit outside. We added a pergola to create privacy and to box it off like an additional room.’

Planning permission was required for the extension and new Velux windows in the roof, which was granted in just a few weeks. Tisdall oversaw the project and introduced Marie-Eve and Richard to their building contractor, Produk. ‘The team was young, hard-working, and incredibly focused on the details,’ Richard recalls.

Work started in August 2014, when the entire house →



Concrete-effect floor tiles blend well with the mushroom-coloured painted kitchen units



Oak flooring has been laid in the original living room at the front of the house

Homeowner highlights

» ‘We’ve learned that, despite first appearances, there’s always a solution. I wanted a shower and Marie-Eve wanted a separate bath, but we were tight on space, so I made paper models of the sanitaryware and moved it around until everything fitted. Now you walk through the shower area to reach the bath.’

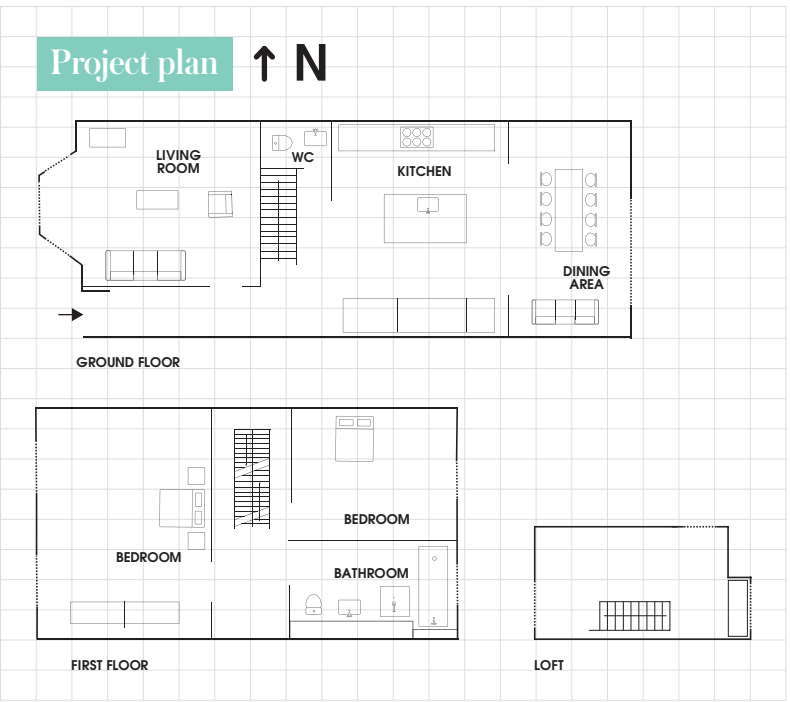
» ‘In hindsight, we would have liked to excavate a mini-basement for additional storage, including a wine cellar.’

» ‘Our top tip for other renovators is to stay on good terms with the neighbours, and make sure you get on well with the team of people you employ.’

» ‘Our favourite thing about the house is the view up through the converted loft to the roof; the skylights bring so much sunshine into the heart of what had previously been a dark space.’

» ‘The best buy was our fantastic dining-room table that Sam Tisdall designed; it’s made from American oak to match the staircase.’

The new main staircase is constructed from engineered oak boards with carefully detailed square-edged treads



Full-height wardrobes in the master bedroom provide plenty of hanging space



‘It feels so much larger and brighter now’

was stripped out and damp-proofed. Reproduction timber sash windows were fitted and the roof structure was rebuilt and clad in slates. Internally, rotten floor joists were replaced and ceilings taken down in readiness for the new open loft space.

‘The bespoke timber and glass doors were being made abroad, and when the company went bust our builder got on a plane and went out to retrieve them,’ says Richard. ‘We couldn’t secure the house without the doors, so we were relieved when they finally arrived after a six-week delay.’

A structural engineer designed the joist system for the converted loft space, which is reached via a chunky staircase fitted with an untreated black gunmetal balustrade. Drawers beneath each step provide vital additional storage. Set against a backdrop of exposed brickwork, the overall effect of this innovative staircase is of a New York loft. American oak flooring and built-in cupboards in the eaves keep the loft area, which Richard uses as a home office, looking bright and uncluttered.

This mezzanine-style space is open to the stairwell: a tall space cutting up through the house, with a roof light strategically positioned above the new oak staircase leading up from the ground floor.

‘The house is now quite open plan, especially since converting the loft into an open-sided office area, and with the staircase open to the kitchen. We needed to install some sort of sprinkler system to meet Building

Regulations for preventing the spread of fire,’ says Richard. ‘Sam recommended an auto-mist system, which uses much less water than standard sprinklers.’

When it came to the interior design, Marie-Eve’s preference for sleek contemporary finishes has been combined with Richard’s more traditional tastes. ‘Marie-Eve’s parents live in a very modern Swiss flat, whereas my family are Scottish and their house is full of books, heavy curtains, carpets, rugs and fireplaces,’ says Richard. ‘Somehow we managed to find a happy medium and we’re thrilled with the outcome.’

The couple, who now have baby Oscar, moved into their new home on December 5 2014, which is Marie-Eve’s birthday. ‘It feels so much larger and brighter now, and we have masses of storage despite losing a chunk of the loft,’ says Richard. ‘People advised us not to buy this house because it was in such a bad state. It was definitely a challenging first project, but we had a really great team of people who designed and built everything to the highest standards. Now we feel extremely lucky to live here.’ **GD**

Grand idea



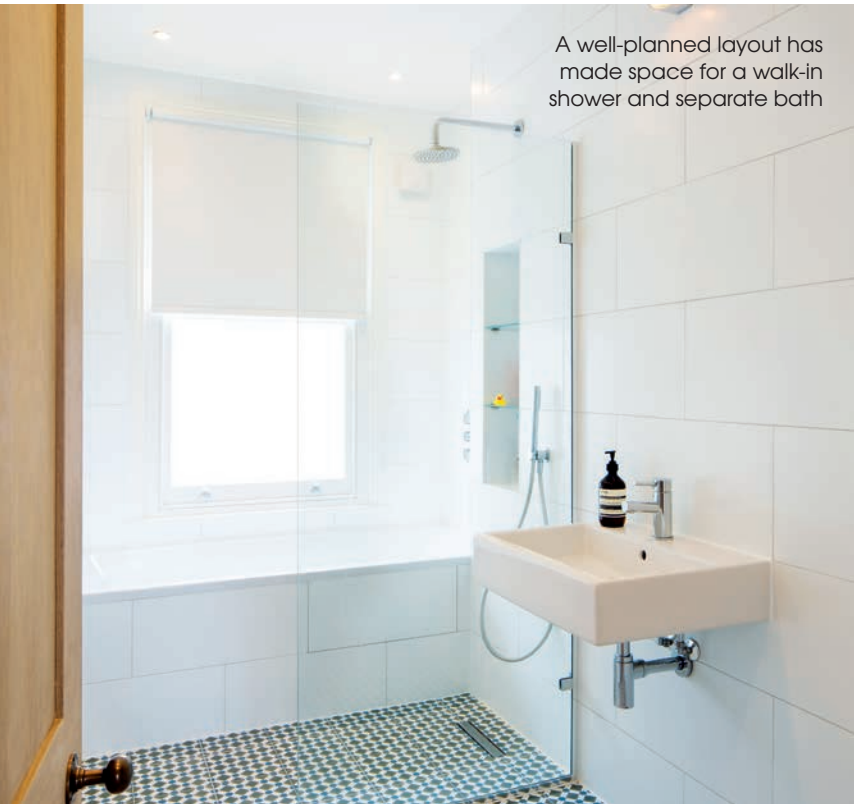
Innovative storage solution

This smart staircase that leads to the attic office has deep, integrated, pull-out boxes that make up for the loss of a traditional loft space. Produk came up with this design, which cost £5,200 (020 3735 5668; produk.co.uk)

Two large roof lights bring daylight into the converted loft space and down into the centre of the house



A well-planned layout has made space for a walk-in shower and separate bath



Suppliers

PROJECT TEAM Architect Sam Tisdall Architects (samtisdall.co.uk) **Builder** Produk (020 3735 5668; produk.co.uk) **Structural engineer** Price & Myers (020 7631 5128; pricemyers.com) **STRUCTURE** Roof lights Velux (01592 778 225; velux.co.uk) **Insulation** Xtratherm (0371 222 1033; xtratherm.com) **Automist system (fire safety)** Plumis (020 7871 3899; plumis.co.uk) **Oak panels** SMI Panels (01206 396 725; smi-hardwoods.com) **FIXTURES & FITTINGS** Kitchen DeVOL (020 3837 5900; devolkitchens.co.uk) **Tiles** The Tile Place (020 8749 1115); Topps Tiles (0800 783 6262; toppstile.co.uk) **Ironmongery** SDS London (020 7228 1185; sdslondon.co.uk) **Sanitaryware**

In Design Bathrooms (020 8439 9079; indesignbathrooms.com) **Lights, kitchen counter lights and kitchen handles** Day True (020 7788 9229; daytrue.com) **Kitchen lights** Holloways of Ludlow (020 7602 5757; hollowaysofludlow.com) **Flooring** The Floor Shop (020 8368 4586; thefloorshop.co.uk) **Fire basket/grate** The Fireplace Shop (020 8741 5013; the-fireplace-shop.co.uk) **Paint** Farrow & Ball (01202 876 141; farrow-ball.com) **FURNITURE & ACCESSORIES** Dining table Sam Tisdall Architects (as before) **Sofa and chairs** SCP (020 7739 1869; scp.co.uk) **Curtains and blinds** Prêt à Vivre (020 3039 3322; pretavivre.com) **Bed and kitchen stools** Day True (as before)

STYLE *finder*

Recreate the clean lines of Richard and Marie-Eve's interior

Compiled by *Emily Seymour*

IN
DETAIL



Bespoke joinery

A striking oak staircase rises through the centre of Richard and Marie-Eve's house. Customised joinery is a sure-fire way to give your project the wow factor, and Holloways of Ludlow's in-house carpenters can create something similar (020 8487 9440; hollowaysbuild.com).

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Swatch watch

1 Classic marble Arabescato Cervaiolo, £295 per sqm, The Marble & Granite Centre (01895 820 883; themarbleandgranitecentre.co.uk)

2 Navy accent Pitch blue estate emulsion, £39.50 for 2.5L, Farrow & Ball (01202 876 141; farrow-ball.com)

3 Urban effect Town brick wallpaper, £12.50 per 10m roll, Albany at Wallpaper Direct (01323 430 886; wallpaperdirect.com)

4 Geometric ceramic Patisserie Hevin tile, £74.70 per sqm, Fired Earth (01295 814 396; firedearth.com)



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1



Get the look

1 Caged lighting Paola pendant in glass and steel, £50, BHS (0344 411 6000; bhs.co.uk)

2 Stand tall Stilts vertical leaner mirror in glass and wood in black, £495, Heal's (020 7896 7451; heals.com)

3 Simple frame Vince eight-seat dining table in walnut, £795, Habitat (0344 499 4686; habitat.co.uk)

4 Square design Memento washbasin in porcelain, £356, Villeroy & Boch (villeroy-boch.co.uk)

5 Royal hue Aztec medium footstool in brushed cotton in navy, £359, Sofa Workshop (0800 230 0048; sofaworkshop.com)



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EDITOR'S VIEW

'The joinery is the star of the show in this inventive redesign of a run-down terrace'