



HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY A 1920s semi-detached house

LOCATION London

ROOMS Sitting room, kitchen-diner/living area, playroom, study, cloakroom, four bedrooms (two en suite), bathroom

PURCHASED 2016

PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'We moved here from a smaller apartment in London,' says Jade.

A SMART MOVE

A modest semi, untouched for over 40 years, offered Jade and Guy Gittins the chance to create a home brimming with style

FEATURE SERENA FOKSCHANER | PHOTOGRAPHY JAMES BALSTON

KITCHEN-DINER/LIVING AREA

The new extension allowed for a flowing, L-shaped floor plan ideal for family living.

Units in Railings estate eggshell, £64 for 2.5ltr, Farrow & Ball. Table, £1,495; In Between SK1 dining chairs, £350 each; Little Petra sheepskin chair (right), £3,531, all & Tradition. Try the Sputnik opal glass 12-light chandelier, £276, Litfad



It takes vision to turn a pebble-dashed semi into a highly polished des res. But Jade and Guy Gittins both work in property, and unleashing the potential of bricks and mortar is what they do. So when they came across this inter-war house, situated in a villagey pocket of south-west London, they sensed an opportunity.

One of a handful of houses built locally in the 1920s, the three-bedroom property was small, but the plot, with its 90 foot-long garden, was tantalisingly wide. The last

owners had lived here for 40 years, and there was, as estate agents might put it, much room for improvement. So having snapped up the property, the couple spent three years living in the house, scrutinising their neighbours' extensions and plotting the next stage. In 2019 they moved out so the builders could move in.

Work was soon underway to expand the size of the house by stretching it sideways, backwards and upwards. Towards the end of the building work, Jade contacted Kathryn

Porter of Kathryn Porter Interiors, with a brief to design a grown-up home. 'Although we have three children, we didn't want an open-plan space scattered with toys,' says the clutter-phobic Guy.

The L-shaped ground floor has a 'civilised' sitting room, a TV den and playroom. Every family member has their own coat cupboard. The children's bedrooms, as well as a guest room and study, are on the first floor. The top floor is devoted to the couple's suite. New windows

SITTING ROOM

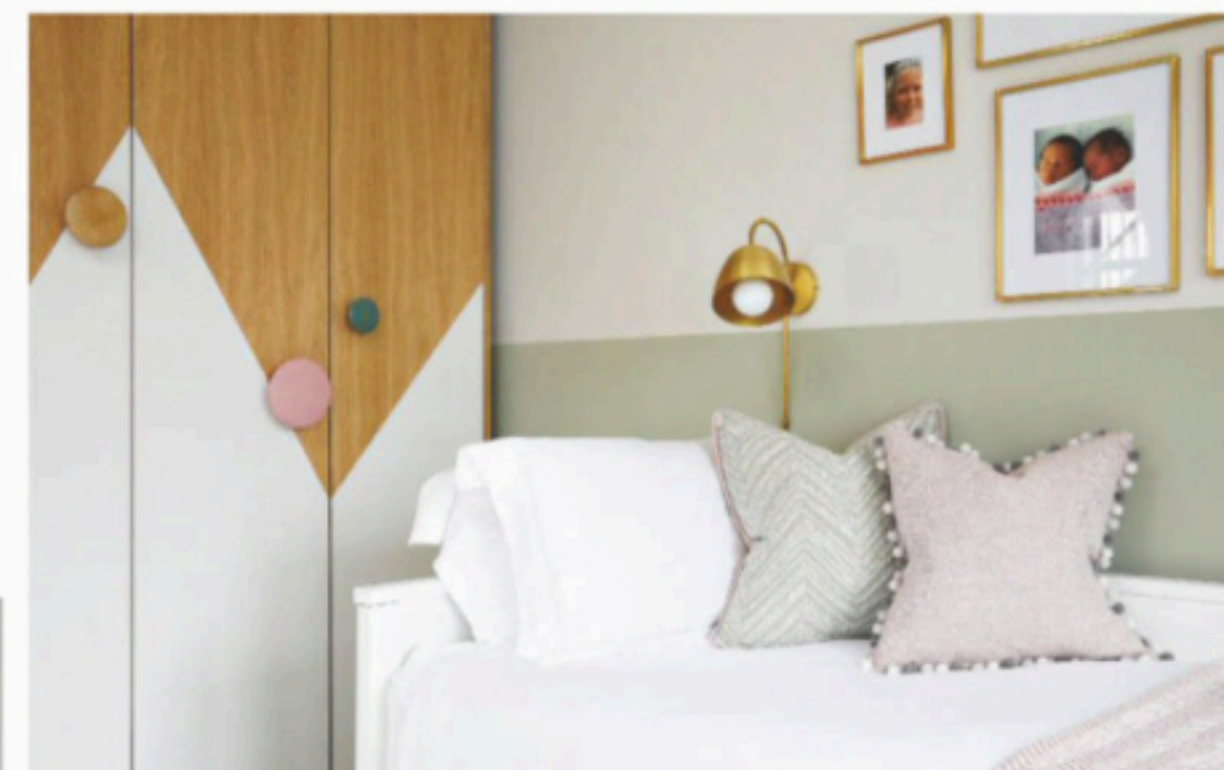
New mouldings add elegance. Allis chandelier, £565, Soho Home

GIRLS' BEDROOM

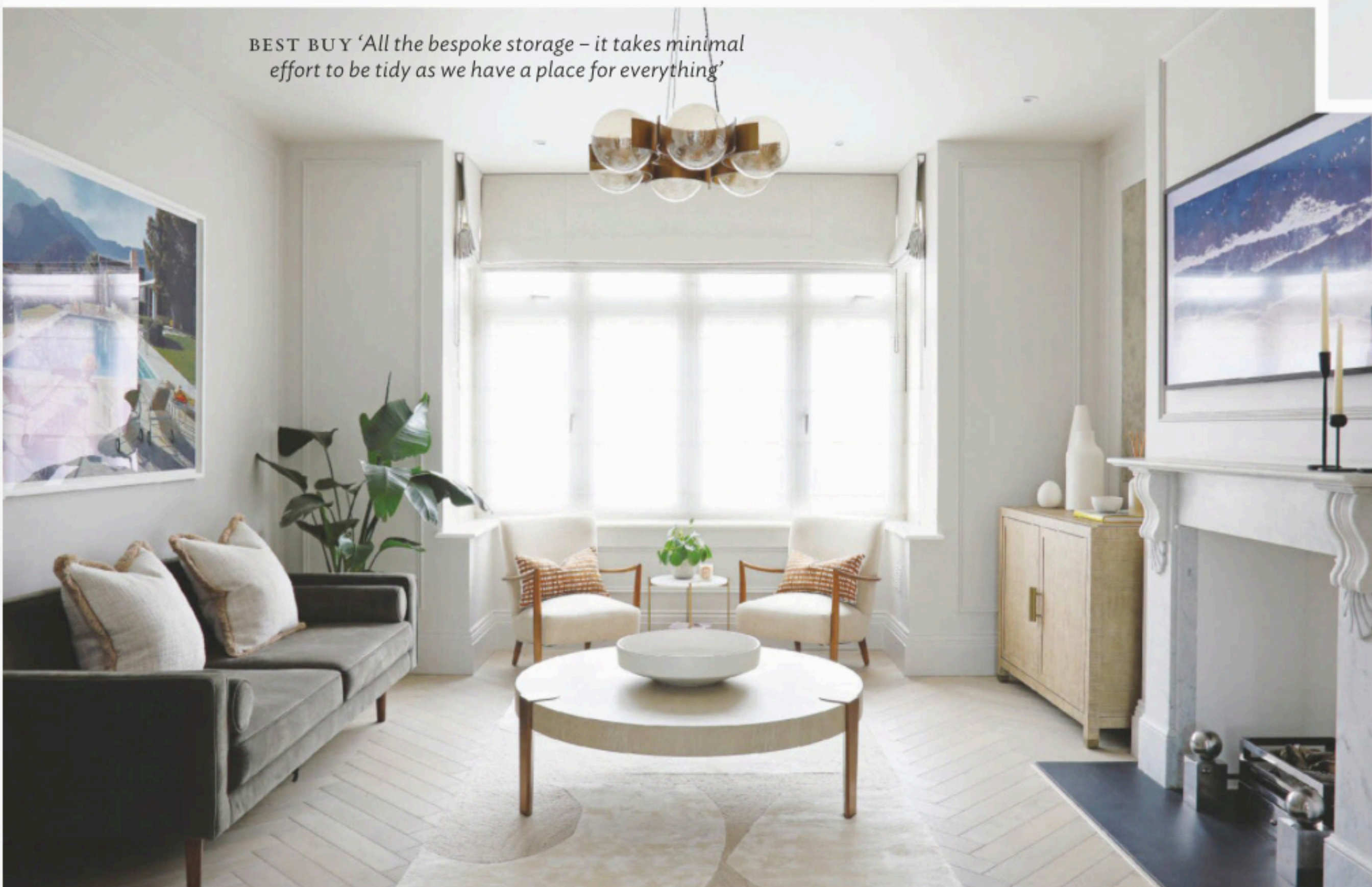
Creative paintwork is a fun touch. Personalised pink velvet cushion with pom poms, £17.50, AnnetteRoseCo at Etsy, is an alternative option

PLAYROOM

Floor-to-ceiling storage means this space can be tidied in minutes. Essaouira by Nobodinoz floor cushions, £89.95 each, Scandibarn



BEST BUY 'All the bespoke storage – it takes minimal effort to be tidy as we have a place for everything'



give a bird's eye view of the cedar-clad garden studio, designed as a guest annexe.

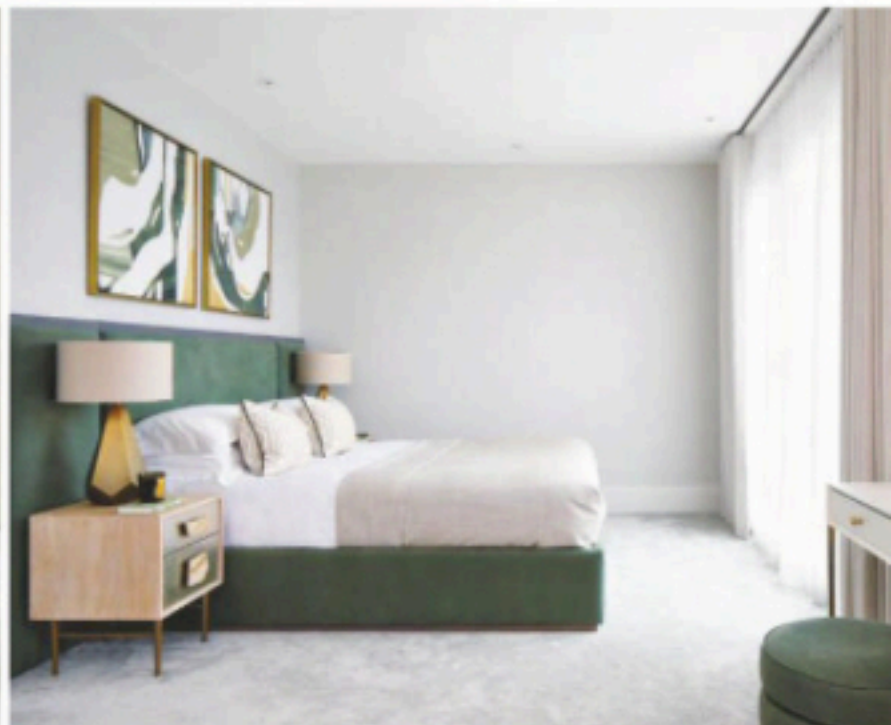
To the three-storey interior, Kathryn brought her hallmark mix of tactile surfaces and natural colours. In the kitchen, where the marble-like surfaces are made of durable Neolith, the navy blue of the cupboards melts to the earthier, olive tones of the banquette covered in a faux leather. 'Guy and Jade knew that they wanted to feature dark units in the kitchen, but the space still

needed to feel bright,' says Kathryn. 'I designed the brass extractor hood to add warmth and open shelving as a visual draw.'

To bring light to the sitting room, Kathryn added glazed doors, while the marble fireplace is a facsimile of the original, which had been badly damaged. Curvy mid-century armchairs and sofas create a laid-back feel while also chiming with the couple's desire for a grown-up look. The glamorous feel stretches to the top-floor

suite where a bath was sacrificed for the walk-in shower. In the master bedroom, whispers of leaf-green nod to the canopy of mature trees in the garden.

The family moved back in two days before Christmas 2019 bringing clothes, and not much else, with them. 'Kathryn had done literally everything – even hanging the paintings and tweaking the cushions,' says Jade. 'It felt like the best Christmas we'd ever had.' 25



BATHROOM

Bolder colours offset the neutral tones.

Elements wall-mounted basin mixer in Brushed Gold, £550, Vado

MASTER BEDROOM

On the new top floor, the self-contained

suite was designed as rooftop haven.

Agata lamps, £220 each, RV Astley. Side table, £399, Roar & Rabbit by West Elm

BOY'S BEDROOM

Kathryn chose a playful wallpaper to brighten this room.

Racer wallpaper, £199 a roll, Sidney Paul & Co. Shelves, £84.95 each, Scandibørn

EN SUITE

The extra storey added to the house includes this striking shower room. Farol wall sconce in Opal, £648, Bert Frank

