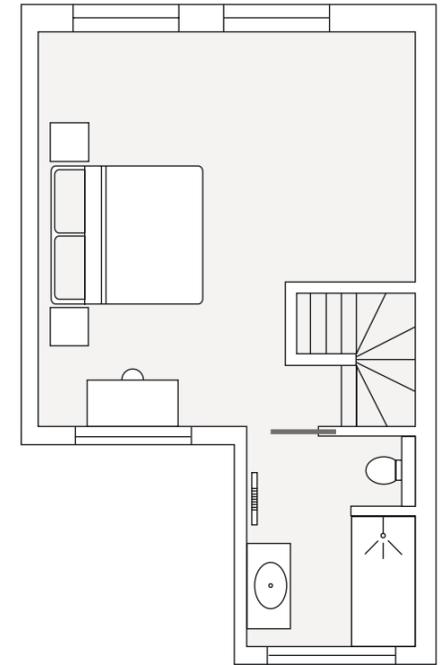




# grand plans

A terraced worker's cottage has undergone a total transformation, doubling in size, with a contemporary look that oozes character and charm

Words: Jacky Parker Photography: Guifre de Peray



**Opening pages (p104-105):** In the master bedroom, the tactile effect of the faux tile wallpaper is beautifully enhanced by the reclaimed timber bedside tables and the layers of sumptuous bed linen.

**Above:** Textured hexagonal tiles add interest to the walls and floor of the walk-in shower and help to create a non-slip environment.

**Opposite page:** Embracing the old-meets-new theme found throughout the house, the master ensuite features an upcycled antique console as a vanity unit.

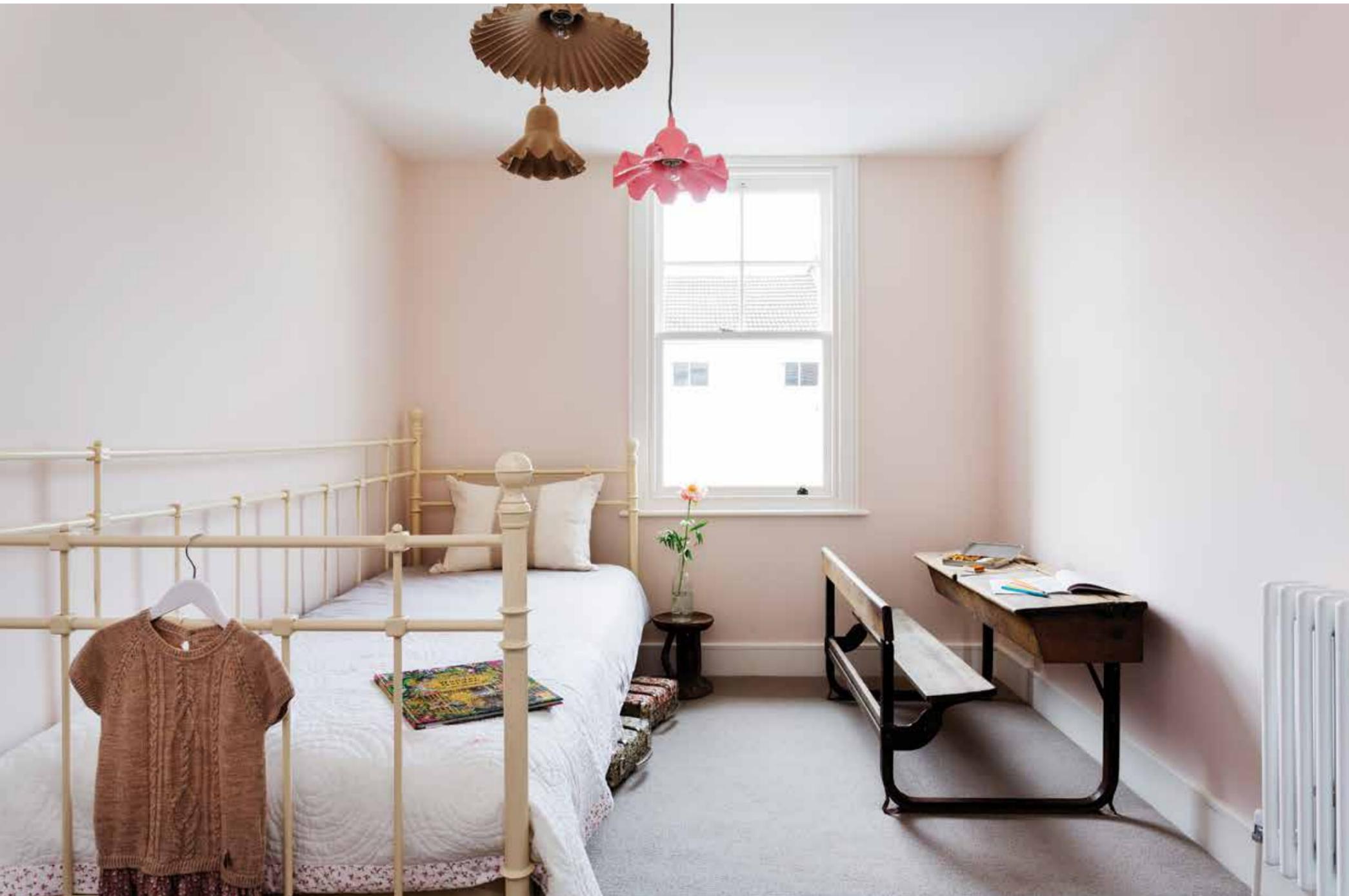
**A** dilapidated worker's cottage in Barnes, south-west London, might not tempt all buyers, but it was just the ticket for Julie Davidson and her five-year-old daughter, Amy. Moving from Buckinghamshire in order to have a quicker commute to her demanding job in the city, the property's proximity to the river was ideal for Julie, a keen rower. "I wanted a shorter journey to work but still wanted to be able to enjoy outdoor pursuits and an element of country life," she says. "The fact that the cottage was a wreck also meant that it was a blank canvas and I could create somewhere unique for Amy and me."

A word-of-mouth recommendation led Julie to Felix and Caroline Milns, founders of Zulufish Residential, a popular local design and build firm. Caroline continues the story.

"Julie saw some of our other projects and liked our aesthetic. She said it was very much in line with what she wanted for her new home, which was for somewhere that felt warm and nurturing when she came home from work, yet also modern, light and spacious enough for entertaining friends and family."

With his expert eye for maximising space, Felix immediately saw that the ground floor could be opened up with a full-width rear extension. There was also the opportunity to convert the loft and locate the master bedroom and ensuite there. "The original footprint of the property was pretty small, but we were able to almost double the size," says Caroline. "The fabric of the building was a cute worker's cottage, so we didn't want to ignore that; rather we decided to create a modern, urban version of it."

The rear of the house was demolished and the inside gutted and reconfigured. The sitting room was to remain at the front of ▶



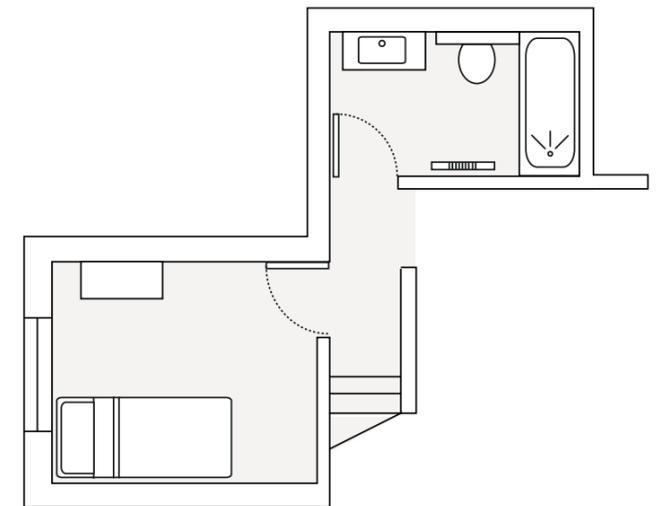
the property, which is flooded with natural light, while the kitchen-dining area was located at the back next to the garden. The design challenge for Caroline was to include an island with a breakfast bar, a separate dining area and somewhere comfortable for Julie to sit with a cup of tea and enjoy the view outside. "This meant using the entire rear of the property for the kitchen," she explains, "but as it's a terrace, we had the perfect spot between kitchen and living room where there is no natural light to tuck a utility room and downstairs loo under the stairs. Ideally you

need those in a family home, but it's unusual to be able to fit them into this type of property." Three skylights and full-width floor-to-ceiling sliding glass doors were installed to bring light into the kitchen. Caroline suggested the herringbone wall cladding and a mix of timbers for the cabinetry complemented by huge pale grey porcelain floor tiles, concrete-effect worktops, a Carrara marble splashback and upstand, and pewter-finish door handles. "The different textures soften the clean lines and contemporary design," explains Caroline. "Julie wanted a neutral backdrop, natural

materials with a polished edge and hints of colour. This mix gives the cottage character and soul, but at the same time it looks smart." The island and floor-to-ceiling cabinetry provide ample storage space and house integrated appliances for an uncluttered feel, while the range cooker forms a focal point. A mix of overhead LED spotlights and chic industrial pendants enable Julie to switch from task to mood lighting. Finally, a sleek royal blue sofa placed next to the dining area makes a good spot to enjoy the garden all year round. ▶

**Above left:** The day bed and vintage desk were sourced from eBay to give Amy's room a unique feel.

**Above right:** Caroline created a timeless look in the family bathroom by blending traditional-style sanitaryware with large-scale modern floor tiles and a sleek glass shower screen.





To increase the usable space further Felix suggested a loft conversion with full-width mansard roof for the master bedroom and a pod room for the ensuite shower room. Julie was keen to continue the neutral, textural theme with the décor, which Caroline achieved with striking geometric wallpaper behind the bed, soft wool carpet and rustic wood and metal bedside tables. Vintage-style radiators, simple glass wall lights and tactile throws and cushions on the bed enhance the cosy look.

In the ensuite, meanwhile, there is a stylish mix of old and new: hexagonal tiles

lend a modern touch and blend easily with the period-style showerhead, taps and towel rail. An antique console found on eBay has been upcycled into a charming vanity unit and teamed with a sleek countertop basin. The look is pulled together with the tiled splashback, created from the same hexagonal tiles.

Although different materials have been used, there is a similar theme in the family bathroom on the first floor. Soft grey crackle-glaze brick tiles around the bath and huge charcoal porcelain tiles on the floor exude a

feeling of calm. A vintage chest of drawers has been transformed into a vanity unit, which brings character to the room and provides storage space for towels and toiletries.

Throughout the cottage Caroline has mixed contemporary pieces with rustic and vintage elements, giving it a stylish yet warm and inviting feel that is in keeping both with the property's origins and Julie's wishes. "I love it," says Julie. "It's exactly what I wanted; it has a unique look that, because of the bespoke and one-off items, would be hard to replicate." [KBB](#)

"Julie wanted a neutral backdrop, natural materials with a polished edge and hints of colour. This mix gives the cottage character and soul."

**Above:** The pendants work on dimmers so the scheme can be changed from task to mood lighting, while the tarnished effect of the metal adds character.

**Opposite page:** Caroline sourced the heavy metal cabinetry handles from Italian brand Giara.

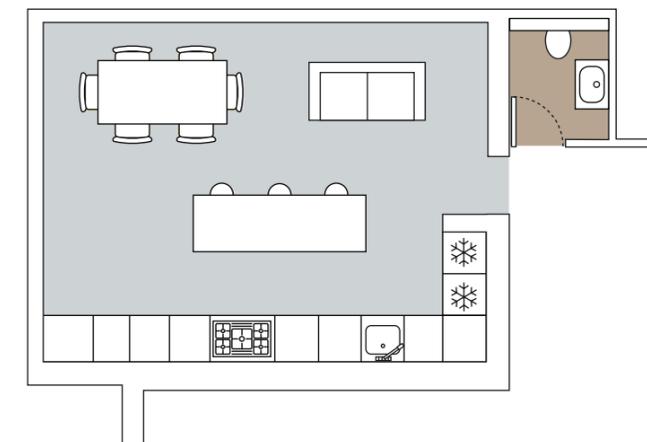


**Below:** Guests can relax on the smart blue sofa and chat to Julie while she is cooking.



**Opposite page:** The breakfast bar provides work space and an informal eating area. The steel barstools complement the soft grey tones of the cabinetry and concrete-look floor.

**Above:** A distressed vintage-style dining table and metal industrial chairs make for a relaxed dining area, with views of the garden. A chic pendant above lends a touch of glamour.



## Q&A

### Designer Caroline Milns says...



#### Which element took up the majority of the budget?

The structural build meant we had to completely reconfigure the space, so that was inevitably the most expensive element.

#### Were there any places you managed to save money?

All the panelled feature walls were designed in house using inexpensive MDF panelling. Also, the fact that Zulufish made the bespoke kitchen.

#### What was the biggest challenge with the project?

The number of structural beams needed to open up and reconfigure the space and the sourcing of noise insulation sufficient for the neighbours, as it is a terraced house.

#### Any tips for people embarking on a similar project?

Allow plenty of time for planning and design, as it is best to have all the design decisions made and all materials chosen before the build starts.

## SourceBook

### DESIGN

**Interior design and building work** Felix and Caroline Milns, Zulufish Residential (020 8747 3743 or [www.zulufish.co.uk](http://www.zulufish.co.uk))

### KITCHEN

**Bespoke cabinetry** Zulufish Residential, as before  
**Worktops** Compac Ice Zement. For similar try MKW Surfaces (020 3078 8912 or [www.mkwsurfaces.co.uk](http://www.mkwsurfaces.co.uk))  
**Flooring** Concrete-look 90 x 90cm porcelain tiles. For similar try Refin Ceramiche ([www.refin-ceramic-tiles.com](http://www.refin-ceramic-tiles.com))  
**Door handles** Giara ([www.giara.info/en](http://www.giara.info/en))  
**Tap** Victorian Plumbing (0345 862 2878 or [www.victorianplumbing.co.uk](http://www.victorianplumbing.co.uk))  
**Sink** Inset. For similar try Blanco (01923 635200 or [www.blanco-germany.com/uk](http://www.blanco-germany.com/uk))  
**Wall cladding** Herringbone MDF bespoke design, Zulufish Residential, as before  
**Appliances** Integrated fridge-freezer, dishwasher and extractor all Siemens at John Lewis (0345 604 9049 or [www.johnlewis.com](http://www.johnlewis.com)); Range cooker, Smeg (0844 557 9907 or [www.smeguk.com](http://www.smeguk.com))  
**Pendant lights** (above island) Rowen & Wren (01276 451077 or [www.rowenandwren.co.uk](http://www.rowenandwren.co.uk)); (above dining table) Ebb & Flow ([www.ebbandflow.dk](http://www.ebbandflow.dk))  
**Barstools** Swoon Editions (020 3389 7550 or [www.swooneditions.com](http://www.swooneditions.com))  
**Glass terrariums** For similar try Oliver Bonas (020 8974 0110 or [www.oliverbonas.com](http://www.oliverbonas.com))  
**Dining table** Made (0344 257 1888 or [www.made.com](http://www.made.com))  
**Dining chairs and sofa** Blue Sun Tree (0116 267 0267 or [www.bluesuntree.co.uk](http://www.bluesuntree.co.uk))  
**Cushion** For similar try Cox & Cox (0330 333 2123 or [www.coxandcox.co.uk](http://www.coxandcox.co.uk))

### CLOAKROOM

**WC, basin and taps** Victorian Plumbing, as before  
**Floor tiles** Tons of Tiles (01752 785623 or [www.tonsofstones.co.uk](http://www.tonsofstones.co.uk))  
**Hexagonal wall tiles** Via Arkadia (020 7351 7057 or [www.via-arkadia.co.uk](http://www.via-arkadia.co.uk))  
**Mirror** Rockett St George (01444 253391 or [www.rockettstgeorge.co.uk](http://www.rockettstgeorge.co.uk))

### MASTER BEDROOM

**Wallpaper** Rockett St George, as before  
**Carpet** Westex Carpets (01274 861334 or [www.westexcarpets.co.uk](http://www.westexcarpets.co.uk))  
**Radiators** Cast Rads (0161 439 9350 or [www.castrads.com](http://www.castrads.com))  
**Bed linen** Ivory Sateen, John Lewis, as before  
**Throw** Zara Home (0800 026 0091 or [www.zarahome.com](http://www.zarahome.com))  
**Cushions** Ting London (020 8355 1938 or [www.tinglondon.com](http://www.tinglondon.com))  
**Bedside tables** Loaf (0845 468 0698 or [www.loaf.com](http://www.loaf.com))

### MASTER ENSUITE

**Basin** Bathstore (0330 053 5661 or [www.bathstore.com](http://www.bathstore.com))  
**Vanity unit** Antique console, eBay ([www.ebay.co.uk](http://www.ebay.co.uk))  
**Brassware and towel rail** Victorian Plumbing, as before  
**Hexagon tiles** Tons of Tiles, as before  
**Wall paint** Slaked Lime Dark 151, Little Greene (0845 880 5855 or [www.littlegreene.com](http://www.littlegreene.com))  
**Mirror** Rockett St George, as before  
**Wall lamps** Astro Lighting (01279 427001 or [www.astrolighting.com](http://www.astrolighting.com))

### CHILD'S ROOM

**Day bed and desk** Vintage, eBay, as before  
**Wall paint** Julie's Dream (260), Little Greene, as before  
**Carpet** Westex Carpets, as before  
**Pendant lights** Made by Design (020 7692 4001 or [www.madeindesign.co.uk](http://www.madeindesign.co.uk))  
**Radiator** Cast Rads, as before

### FAMILY BATHROOM

**Bath, shower screen, sanitaryware, brassware and towel rail** Victorian Plumbing, as before  
**Brick tiles** Tons of Tiles, as before  
**Floor tiles** Tiles to You (01536 525521 or [www.tilestoyou.com](http://www.tilestoyou.com))  
**Wall paint** Ammonite, Farrow & Ball (01202 850240 or [www.farrow-ball.com](http://www.farrow-ball.com))  
**Basin** Bathstore, as before  
**Sideboard** Vintage, eBay, as before  
**Wall lights** Ebb & Flow, as before  
**Mirror** Rockett St George, as before

### COST

A similar kitchen would cost around £35,000, a similar master bedroom would cost around £10,000, and a similar master ensuite would cost around £12,500

**Below:** The wall cladding continues in the understairs cloakroom, providing subtle continuity with the rest of the ground floor. The geometric floor tiles look smart and modern.

