

Be my guest

A glorious Victorian rectory, nestled in a beautiful conservation area, has been sympathetically extended to provide a spacious home for family and friends

Words: **Jo Welch** Photography: **Matthew P Wright**



Previous page (p159): Elegant limestone flooring from Cotswold-based Indigenous finishes off the refined feel of the overall space.

Right: A key consideration in Pippa Paton's design was her clients' collection of art, where certain pieces were specifically selected to hang in the kitchen space. Pippa has implemented accent colours from the artworks into the furniture design, seen here in the seats of the barstools.

Opposite page, top right: The curved European oak breakfast bar is ideal for guests to sit around sociably and also affords a good flow around the room.

Bottom right: The new extension that houses the kitchen had to blend seamlessly with the original Victorian architecture.



Julia Harland and her husband David have lived in this graceful Victorian rectory – a magnificent home in the stunning south Oxfordshire countryside – for over 25 years. As their family life has evolved and children have grown up and left home, so too the house's function has changed. However, with the couple's children often returning home to visit, and friends and family frequently staying, it's not unusual for Julia to be catering for upwards of 16 people on any one day, which in particular was putting real pressure on the original small and rather dated kitchen.

Thus the couple decided to search for a designer who could create an extension to the original kitchen and dining area to provide a large, open-plan space that would include a breakfast bar, dining and sitting areas, somewhere to serve drinks and an office area. Designing the extension to the property was not an easy task, given the complexity of the structure of the building and the fact that it was crucial that the newly built structure blended seamlessly with the original Victorian style. Julia and David appointed Cotswold designer Pippa Paton

Design to manage the project in its entirety, from planning the space and overseeing the build, through to the bespoke kitchen design, and interior decorating.

The kitchen is sited at the back of the property, looking out onto the beautiful landscaped gardens and swimming pool. Incorporated in the open-plan kitchen space, as requested, are dining, sitting and office areas, making the room the real hub of the home, where the family and their regular guests spend most of their time. Julia and David had a few things on their wishlist when briefing Pippa Paton and her project director, Scott.

"Our clients didn't want a conservatory as part of the new extension, but they were keen on having large sections of glass incorporated to flood the space with natural light," explains Pippa. "And whilst they wanted a completely new kitchen, they had several existing items which they have always used when entertaining that needed to be included, such as their original Belling warming cabinet. Julia and David also have an extensive collection of art and

sculptures and wanted some of the larger pieces to be displayed in the kitchen."

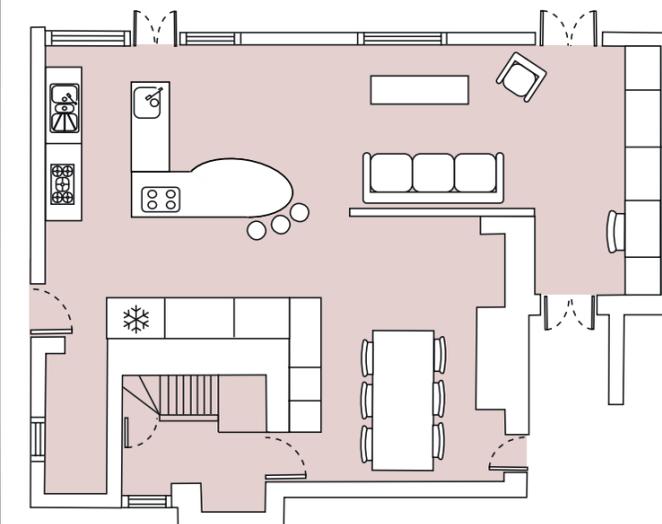
Ultimately the couple wanted a cleverly planned, ergonomic space that could both be intimate when they are at home alone but also with good circulation to comfortably accommodate a large number of people. "It is critical that we have a detailed understanding of our clients' requirements and lifestyle before drawing up designs," continues Pippa. "I spent a couple of briefing meetings intensively questioning Julia about exactly how she anticipated the space being used, from general information about frequency of entertaining, through to the nitty gritty of which pots and pans she used and how often. It is only after absorbing this intimate level of detail that we can then begin the design."

Such details include everything from installing two dishwashers, ideal when entertaining, to a Corian windowsill so Julia can germinate seeds there. In addition, Pippa's real speciality is lighting – often the design element that really makes a space sing. Originally when Pippa proposed the silver grey used on the cabinetry, Julia was worried that it would

look cold and harsh, being used to unforgiving fluorescent lighting. Instead, controllable LED lights provide fabulous warmth and bring out the best in the cabinetry's tones.

Above the kitchen within the new extension, Pippa also came up with plans for an additional bathroom. The space was ideally positioned to become a natural ensuite bathroom for Julia and David's main guest bedroom. "An ensuite to a guest room, especially in a home that entertains so frequently, was an obvious inclusion into the extension," explains Pippa. "We kept the design sleek and pared-back: the suede colour of the floor-to-ceiling tiled walls adds warmth, and the high-end fittings offer guests real decadence."

Julia and David were incredibly impressed with Pippa Paton Design's meticulous attention to detail and planning throughout. The new kitchen area has transformed their life and the luxurious new bathroom is a real treat for guests. As Julia herself enthuses, "I wouldn't change a single detail – my expectations have been utterly surpassed!" **[KBB]**



Below: A mantel was created above the AGA in the same oak used for the curved breakfast bar.



Above left: The original kitchen had a deep alcove and disused fireplace. The alcove has been used to make a drinks cupboard with pocket doors and the fireplace houses Julia's original Belling warming cabinet.

Left: Silestone natural quartz worktops are an ideal fit for Julia's kitchen as they are hard-wearing for intensive use and complement the colour palette and style of the whole scheme.

Above: The intimate dining area is a sophisticated space with an antique table that blends with the natural oak timber of the island unit. Panelled walls are painted in the same silver grey as the kitchen cabinetry, while

the plain walls are painted in a paler tone of the same silver.

Below: Practically designed drawers with oak interiors ensure there is a place for everything in the kitchen.



“Julia and David have an extensive collection of art and sculptures and wanted some of the larger pieces to be displayed in the kitchen.”



Left: Julia and David didn't want a conservatory extension, but plenty of glass in the form of Velux windows throughout keeps the whole space light and bright.

Below: There are plenty of places for guests of this sociable couple to relax.

Opposite page, top: The seating area looks out across the garden and leads through to Julia's office space. The pale grey leather sofa that Julia and David already owned was a perfect fit.

Bottom right: Silver grey cabinetry, oak worktops and pale limestone flooring extend through into the study area from the kitchen.



Q&A

Designer Pippa Paton says...



What element took up the majority of the budget?

Creating the open-plan kitchen space was the single largest cost as it involved significant structural alterations to open up the back of the house. As the original home was constructed of such high-quality materials and with excellent workmanship it was essential the extension was equal to this. This required specialists to identify and specify the correct selection of bricks in exactly the right sizes and blend to match the house perfectly along with quality stonemasonry to cap all of this. In addition, the glazing was carefully considered to allow sufficient light and warmth, but the levels were controlled to ensure the space did not overheat nor become unduly noisy.

What advice do you give clients on finding contractors?

Always pay for the best you can afford, but ensure they have the right capabilities and experience for the project. You may have a favourite builder for smaller jobs, but don't give them a major project without ensuring they are capable of all the tasks you want completed. Use specialists where particular finishes are required, as they tend to be able to create a better final result than a general tradesman.

Any tips for people embarking on a similar project?

Be clear about what you want and, more importantly, what you don't want. Julia and David were very clear about why they wanted to do this extension, how they wanted to live in it and use it and crucially that they did not want the extension looking like a conservatory but rather a part of the house.





Left: The sophisticated ensuite guest bathroom has been designed with luxury and tranquility in mind.

Above: A vanity countertop in a suede-effect Silestone and muted silver floor-to-ceiling tiles create a cool, streamlined look.

SourceBook

DESIGN

Project management and interior design Pippa Paton Design (01865 595470 or www.pippapatondesign.co.uk)

KITCHEN

Cabinetry Bespoke by Pippa Paton Design, as before, painted in Silver, Zoffany (0844 543 4600 or www.zoffany.com)

Worktops, upstands and splashbacks European oak timber, Pippa Paton Design, as before; Unsu, Silestone (01256 761229 or www.silestone.co.uk)

Sink Franke (0161 436 6280 or www.franke.com)

Taps Mixer taps, Blanco (01923 635200 or www.blanco.co.uk); Boiling-water tap, Quooker (0808 102 0677 or www.quooker.co.uk)

Appliances Built-in ovens, microwave and dishwashers, all Siemens (0344 892 8999 or www.siemens.co.uk); Range cooker, AGA (0845 712 5207 or www.agaliving.com); Fridge-freezer, Fisher & Paykel (0800 088 6605 or www.fisherpaykel.com)

Flooring Limestone Heritage tiles, Indigenous (01993 824200 or www.indigenous.co.uk)

Walls Half Silver, Zoffany, as before

Barstools Bespoke by Pippa Paton Design, as before

Dining table and chairs For similar try Harveys (0344 847 2626 or

www.harveysfurniture.co.uk)

Sofa For similar try DFS (0808 149 3745 or www.dfs.co.uk)

BATHROOM

Shower panel and tray Merlyn (+353 567791555 or www.merlynshowering.com)

Basin and WC Villeroy & Boch (020 8875 6006 or www.villeroy-boch.co.uk)

Brassware Hansgrohe (01372 472001 or www.hansgrohe.co.uk)

Towel radiator Chatsworth (01276 605880 or www.chatsworth-heating.co.uk)

Vanity Bespoke by Pippa Paton Design, as before; Vanity top, Silestone Blanco Suede, as before

Lighting For similar try Astro Lighting (01279 427001 or www.astrolighting.co.uk)

Tiles Glasgow in silver, Porcelanosa (0844 481 8959 or www.porcelanosa.com/uk)

COST

Bespoke kitchens from Pippa Paton Design cost from £35,000 and bathrooms from £15,000, excluding appliances, fixtures and fittings



This cupboard was specifically designed to fit and hang the saucepans Julia uses daily, as she found pan drawers awkward.