

25 BEAUTIFUL HOMES

A WARM WELCOME

Cosy thatched cottage | Stylish school conversion | Chic Art Deco flat

A HOME FOR ENTERTAINING

'We saw this former rectory and knew it was the one'

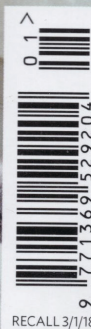
INSPIRED IDEAS

Transforming a barn
Creating statement walls

FROM FLATS TO A FAMILY HOUSE

'Hygge sums up that festive feeling'

NEW YEAR, NEW LOOKS
DECORATING WITH COLOUR AND PATTERN



INSPIRING



HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY

Detached Victorian house

LOCATION Surrey

ROOMS Hall, formal sitting room, sitting room, kitchen-diner, playroom, office, six bedrooms (two en suite), two bathrooms

PURCHASED 2015

PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'We lived in a Victorian terrace in nearby Richmond,' says Leoma.

DINING AREA

Dark paintwork on the table legs and tall cabinet adds depth to this light-filled space.

Woodcroft Colonial grey oak dining table, £2,595, One World; base painted in Railings modern eggshell, £66 for 2.5L, Farrow & Ball

CALM OASIS

Leoma Harper and husband Gary used soothing shades to bring out the beauty of their home

FEATURE ANNABELLE GRUNDY | PHOTOGRAPHY COLIN POOLE

SITTING ROOM

Shutters highlight the bay window's graceful curve and make a striking contrast to the walls.

Bespoke shutters, The New England Shutter Company. Walls painted in Stiffkey Blue modern emulsion, £43.50 for 2.5L, Farrow & Ball

KITCHEN

Leoma made just a few easy updates to the existing scheme, adding a white range cooker to create a modern country feel.

Rangemaster Elise 110 white cooker, £2,279, John Lewis. Talia bar stools, £130 each, Habitat



FORMAL SITTING ROOM

The high ceiling lends itself to an elaborate chandelier. 'When it arrived I was convinced it would be far too big, but it's perfect,' says Leoma.

A similar chandelier is the Cannes crystal drop, £2,199, Sweetpea & Willow. The Fingal three-seater sofa is similar, £1,490, Sofa.com. Preserved rose arrangement, price on request, Harpers Bloom



MAIN BEDROOM

The chimney breast was widened so that the elegant bed could be positioned as the focal point. The Delphine French upholstered bed, £1,397, The French Bedroom Company, is a match. Brookby framed leaf prints, £75 for two, One World

DESIGN TIP 'Big storage baskets are a brilliant solution for keeping children's toys under control – everything can be thrown in quickly, and it's all out of sight'

Leoma Harper had no plans to move from the Victorian home she shared with her husband Gary and one-year-old daughter Alexa in southwest London. So when Gary suggested relocating to a quieter area, Leoma had one stipulation. 'It had to be a period property,' she says. 'I love old houses for their space, character and wonderful features, especially high ceilings.'

The couple considered various options, but it wasn't until they viewed a detached, three-storey Victorian villa just across the Thames from Hampton Court Palace, that Leoma started to get excited. 'It was in a peaceful position, but very convenient,' she explains. 'The previous owner had lived here for many years, so the house had been well-looked after. I knew it was an amazing find, so we decided to go for it.'

The property's attractive, orangery-style kitchen-diner was a huge plus point, but the

whole house was crying out for colour and softness to bring out its elegant character and substantial proportions. 'There was grey carpet and laminate flooring everywhere,' recalls Leoma. 'It felt rather dull and corporate. The bones were fine, though, so I knew it needed cosmetic changes rather than a huge refurbishment.'

Meticulous planning

While the sale progressed, Leoma began gathering design ideas. 'I got the builder lined up and chose flooring, paint colours and new tiles for the kitchen,' she says.

Most of the work was done in a four-month push, during which the family lived on the top floor. On the ground and first levels, walls were replastered and painted, and new wood floors and carpets were laid. Although life with a toddler in a chaotic home was a challenge, the buzz outweighed the stress for Leoma. 'Watching

the potential of this house become a reality was a very rewarding process,' she reflects.

Now with a new addition to the family – Sebastian, one – Leoma and Gary have found that the extra space in their home has really come into its own. The open-plan kitchen-diner is an ideal spot for everyone to gather in and the adjacent snug makes a great playroom. 'It's a family house, so it has to work for everyone,' says Leoma.

A fan of both relaxed Scandi and rustic French style, Leoma readily mixes old and new; salvaged, painted pieces sit alongside contemporary furniture and accessories. She has also noticed a gradual move away from the all-white look of her previous home. 'I'm definitely getting more into colour at the moment and I like the contrast of dark and light,' she says. 'An inky blue palette has completely transformed the sitting room and I love its cosiness. This is the perfect house for us and we feel lucky to live here.'



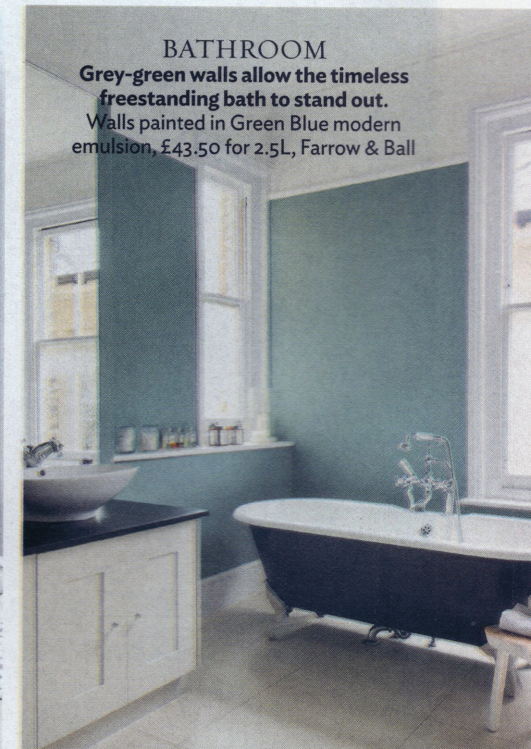
ALEXA'S BEDROOM

The curtains, left by the previous owner, were the inspiration for the muted look. Casadeco Jules et Julie wallpaper, £26 a roll, Select Wallpaper & Fabrics



PLAYROOM

A bright sofa and alcoves coated in chalkboard paint bring a fun touch to this space. Achilles sofa, £1,795, Loaf. Copper round pendant, £280, Tom Dixon



BATHROOM

Grey-green walls allow the timeless freestanding bath to stand out. Walls painted in Green Blue modern emulsion, £43.50 for 2.5L, Farrow & Ball