

25 Beautiful HOMES

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'WE LOVE OUR HOME'

1950s mews house
Stylish riverside cottage
Spacious modern home

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30 LIVING ROOMS
12 HALLWAYS

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DINING ROOM

The leaf design on the floor lamp allude to the courtyard garden.

Florentine floor lamp with ivory silk shade, £957, Porta Romana (01420 23005, portaromana.co.uk). **Dining table** with weathered oak top; check upholstered armchair, both price on request, The L&C Company (07881 910967, thelandccompany.com). **Nicolai dining chairs**, £399 each, Oka (0844 815 7380, okadirect.com)

Finding their **MEWS**

CHRIS AND CAROL HILL INTRODUCED
A HARMONIOUS MIX OF FURNISHINGS
INTO THEIR ELEGANT HOME

FEATURE FAITH ECKERSALL PHOTOGRAPHY NICK CARTER



THE OWNERS

Chris Hill, who is a commercial property developer, his wife Carol

and their son James

- **THEIR HOME** 1950s mews
- **LOCATION** West London
- **ROOMS** Hall, sitting room, kitchen-diner, family room, laundry room, four bedrooms (two en suite), dressing room, bathroom
- **PURCHASED** 2009
- **PREVIOUS PROPERTIES** 'We've moved around in Britain and abroad but this is our first home in the capital,' says Chris.

HOME TRUTHS

CONSERVATORY

The couple's collection of unusual accessories are beautifully displayed.

Medusa console table, from £2,764, Porta Romana. Walls painted in **Slate II** and **Slate IV emulsions**, £29.50 for 2.5 litres, Paint & Paper Library (020 7590 9860, paintlibrary.co.uk)



FAMILY ROOM

A selection of faux flowers ensure year-round blooms.

Rose stems, from £8.95 each, RTFact (01372 470580, rtfactflowers.co.uk)





KITCHEN

'The cabinetry was excellent value,' says Chris. 'It looks twice as expensive as the price we actually paid.'

Avant Ivory units topped with Star Galaxy granite, around \$17,000. Godalming Kitchens (01483 424466, godalming-kitchens.co.uk)



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he knack of knowing when to do things yourself and when to get expert help is vital for any homeowner, and so it proved for Chris and Carol Hill when it came to dressing their west London mews. 'As a commercial property developer, I knew I'd be able to redesign the house's structure but we decided to seek advice when it came to choosing the decor,' says Chris.

Having not lived in the capital before, the Hills found the choice of properties on offer bewildering at first. 'Then we were shown this secluded mews, with its façade covered in Virginia creeper,' Chris recalls. 'We didn't even have to open the door; we knew there and then it was the place for us.'

REMODELLING THE INTERIOR

Built in the 1950s, the four-storey mews was ripe for renovation, and Chris soon brought in contractors to start gutting its interior. At lower-ground level, they demolished an awkward arrangement of partition walls surrounding a lobby at the centre of the house. This helped create an open-plan living zone adjacent to the kitchen. The builders also removed the patio doors leading to a conservatory that the previous owner used for dining. 'It's now part of the same area and the furniture can be turned back in to face the dining table or away to look into the garden,' says Chris. 'It's a tiny space outside but very pretty at night.'

Upstairs, the couple's sitting room spans the entire width of the mews. 'It's lovely to sit up there and look out over the cobbled street,' says Chris. Elsewhere on the first floor, an en-suite bedroom was carved out of one larger space, while removing the water tank from the floor above created enough footage for the master suite, incorporating a dressing room, bathroom and a discreet laundry area. The third floor was also reconfigured to make more of the mansard roof. After obtaining permission to enlarge the dormers and install a balcony, a single bedroom and cramped bathroom were remodelled as two bedrooms with a 'Jack and Jill' bathroom, that can be entered from either end.

FORTUITOUS MEETING

With the construction work complete, Chris and Carol turned their attention to the furnishings. 'We met designers Claire Grant and Lucy Manchester at a showhome in Surrey,' says Chris. 'It became obvious we liked the same things, so we gave them the commission. Our only stipulation was that, while we did want a wow factor, we wanted the scheme to be largely understated.' The Hills' desire for a comfortable, welcoming home ►



SITTING ROOM

The mirrored bookcase makes a dramatic statement.

Circle bookcase in black stained-oak with a distressed mirror front, from £3,857, Julian Chichester (020 7622 2928, julian.chichester.co.uk)



DECORATING TIP 'ALWAYS CONSIDER USING AN INTERIOR DESIGNER AS THEY'LL HELP YOU TO ACHIEVE THE LOOK YOU WANT – AND SAVE YOU FROM MAKING EXPENSIVE MISTAKES'



SITTING ROOM

The armchair by the window makes a perfect spot to curl up with a good book.

Nickel-plated floor lamp with fixed shade, £395, India Jane (020 8961 8844, indiajane.co.uk).

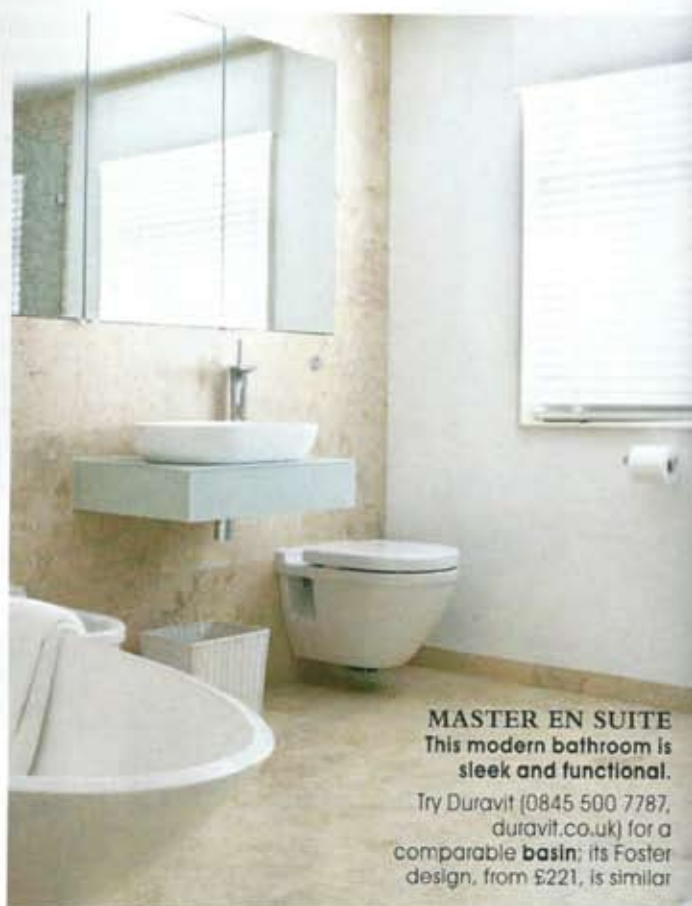
Larson rectangular coffee table, £1,457, Julian Chichester



**MASTER BEDROOM**

'At first, we couldn't get our headboard through the doors,' Chris recalls, 'so it was taken apart then reassembled.'

Bespoke headboard, The L&C Company (07881 910967, thelandccompany.com). **Botanica Silver Birch wallpaper**, \$65 for a 10-metre roll, G.P. & J. Baker (01202 266700, gpjbaker.com)

**MASTER EN SUITE**
This modern bathroom is sleek and functional.

Try Duravit (0845 500 7787, duravit.co.uk) for a comparable **basin**; its Foster design, from £221, is similar

**GUEST BEDROOM**

This suite is dressed in boutique-hotel style.

Lp18 Gh table lamps, £395 each, Andrew Martin (020 7225 5100, andrewmartin.co.uk)

was fulfilled by choosing textured fabrics, modern wallpaper and discreet lighting.

Claire and Lucy also drew inspiration from the magnificent magnolia tree that peeps over the original stable wall at the rear of the property's garden. They sourced a linen fabric, delicately embroidered with magnolia buds, to upholster some of the soft furnishings and highlighted the tree's soft yellows, greens and taupes elsewhere. 'We just love the calm and tranquillity of our London oasis,' Chris enthuses. 'Renovating the mews has been an absolute pleasure.' **11**

BE INSPIRED BY THE TABLE LAMPS IN THE HILLS' HOME

GET THE LOOK



Tilly lamp, £145, The French Bedroom Co (0845 644 8022, frenchbedroomcompany.co.uk)



Wooden table lamp, £75, The White Company (0845 676 8150, thewhitecompany.com)



Glass optic table lamp, £89, Marks & Spencer (0845 302 1234, mands.com)

