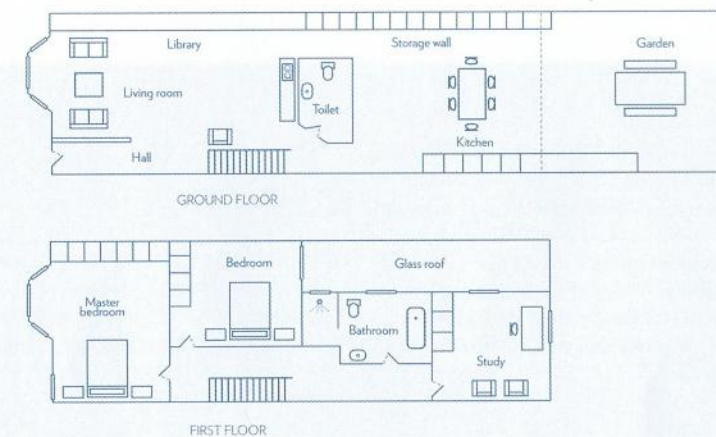




HALLWAY

The first glimpse into Ceilidh and Will's world is through the fish tank, which brings light into the entrance. The original narrow hallway has been removed to win back square-footage for the living area. The fussy Victorian balustrade, meanwhile, has been replaced with a solid wall, which lends itself better to the simple, clean lines of the space.

Aquarium Group sells similar bespoke fish tanks. The Wassily chair by Marcel Breuer for Knoll International is from The Conran Shop. The Convex mirror on the far wall is by Sebastian Wrong for Established & Sons at Mint.



In the swim

Ceilidh and Will have created a modern space full of cunning tricks, such as the fish-tank room divider and the calm living space that turns into a nightclub

WORDS RACHEL LEEDHAM | PHOTOGRAPHY DAVID HISCOCK | STYLING KAREN MALACARNE

DETAILS

The people

Ceilidh Waddington and her husband Will bought this house in Kensal Green two years ago. 'Lots of our friends lived in the area, so it was the obvious location when we started looking for a new home,' says Ceilidh. 'This is the first place we've bought together, so we wanted to put our stamp on it.'

The space

HOW IT WAS A four-bedroom Victorian house, untouched since the Seventies.

GOOD POINTS The property is on a quiet, neighbourly street in an up-and-coming area.

NOT-SO-GOOD POINTS Downstairs was a rabbit warren of tiny, disjointed rooms, including a kitchen and the only bathroom.

LOCATION Kensal Green, north-west London.

The brief

'We'd inherited a lot of closed-off, gloomy little rooms, so we wanted to open up the ground floor and bring in as much light as possible,' says Will, CEO of a ticket comparison website. 'As an Australian, I wanted the garden to be part of the living space,' adds Ceilidh, who works for an investment bank. The couple also knew that they would need ample storage to house music-buff Will's huge collection of vinyl and CDs, and Ceilidh's equally impressive array of shoes. They met architect Paul McAneary the day they completed on the property, and instantly felt he'd be able to interpret their ideas. 'Paul has a very contemporary approach without being too stark,' says Will. 'He has a good eye for detail.' >



LIVING SPACE

Bespoke shelving keeps Will's music collection organised. It incorporates cupboards with screens made from the same material used to cover Marshall amplifiers, which allows the transmission of infrared, enabling the couple to keep gadgets such as the DVD player hidden. They call the record deck unit the 'mobile disco'. 'It's fitted with wheels so we can move it around when we have a party,' says Will.

THIS PICTURE 12in records are mounted in Play & Display frames from The Conran Shop. The rug is from Aram Store. **BELOW RIGHT** The rugs are by Eileen Gray from Aram Store. The Darwin sofa is by Arflex from Viaduct. The Shanghai Tip cushions are by Moroso at Mint. For a similar coffee table, visit Marks & Spencer.



THE GARDEN

The garden was raised to link with the kitchen floor. As this space is small, architect Paul designed all the fixed furniture (the benches and planters) at an angle to create a false perspective, drawing the eye to a vanishing point and so making the space appear bigger. The white walls and outdoor units (which feature the same worktop as the kitchen units) bring an architectural feel to the space, adding to the illusion that this is another 'room' outside.

The table and benches are from Habitat. The kitchen units are from Alno, the worktops are by Livra. I-D-Systems can design patio doors like this. For a pergola, try The Chelsea Gardener. Ikea has metal plant pots.

KITCHEN

An extension into the redundant side return has created a spacious kitchen-diner that's flooded with light. The wall of cupboards is made from Ikea carcasses fitted with high-quality doors – an example of the couple's mission to get sleek, contemporary details at a reasonable price. The floor is laid with easy-to-maintain porcelain tiles. 'We wanted our home to be party-proof,' says Ceilidh.

The table is by Habitat. The red 03 chair is by Maarten Van Severen at Vitra from Aram Store. The cork stool is by Jasper Morrison at Vitra from Viaduct. The Unikko tea towel is by Marimekko at The Conran Shop. Surface sells porcelain tiles. >





◀ BEDROOM

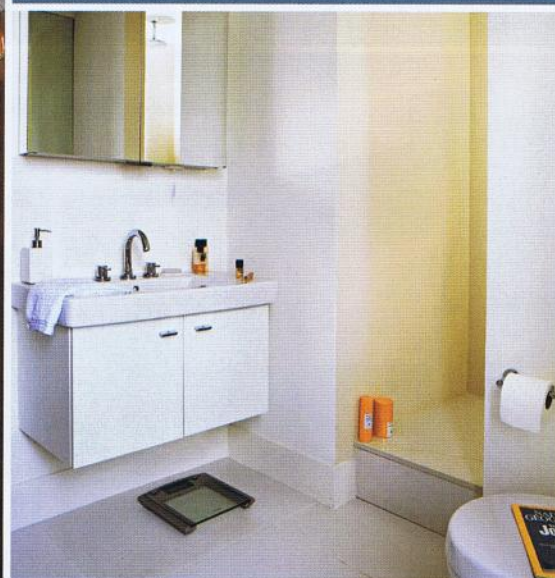
Clever storage means the bedroom is calm and clutter-free. The whole of one wall is taken up with floor-to-ceiling cupboards, housing everything from Ceilidh's shoes to a flatscreen TV.

The Cherner chair is from Aram Store. The Society Nite sheet is from Mint. The blinds are from Powell Blinds. Next Home sells similar rugs.

▼ BATHROOM

The small fourth bedroom was converted into a bathroom with a walk-in shower. It's tiled in ceramic tiles that are usually used as cladding on skyscrapers – a very hard-wearing choice.

The sanitaryware is from Villeroy & Boch, the shower head from Hansgrohe. Pilkington stocks large ceramic tiles.



The expert's opinion

PAUL McANEARY OF PAUL McANEARY ARCHITECTS

Biggest challenge? This was our first Victorian conversion, and our challenge was to create large spaces with vast amounts of hidden storage without spoiling the clean lines.

What are you most proud of? The way the downstairs spaces connect in a 'loop' plan – double access from the living area to the kitchen encourages fluid movement.

Any on-site headaches? One of the huge ceramic tiles for the walk-in shower arrived from Spain cracked.

How was the client-architect relationship? So good we've become friends. I discovered in Will someone who is as obsessed with details as I am. My partner and Ceilidh discovered a mutual passion for shoes.

Locals' verdict? Ceilidh and Will wanted to be discreet and remain private, but even before the planting had matured, we were commissioned by four sets of neighbours. paulmcaneary.com

CEILIDH'S VERDICT

How long did it take? Eight months. Will project-managed and was on site pretty much every day.

Any tricky moments? We lived in a tiny bedsit for the last three months of the build – just awful.

What did you learn? Will would say we were quite mean! We preferred to source things ourselves to keep the budget under control.

Best thing about your home? It's great for parties – the whole ground floor turns into a nightclub.

What would you change? We only have a switch on one side of the bed for our night lights. It drives me mad!

Would you do it again? Yes. We can't imagine living in a home that wasn't exactly to our taste.



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