

City idyll

Situated in west London, this NINETEENTH-CENTURY COTTAGE was REDESIGNED by architect Johnny Holland to MAXIMISE SPACE and create a LIGHT-FILLED, functional interior

TEXT CAROLINE CLIFTON-MOGG | PHOTOGRAPHS SARAH HOGAN | LOCATIONS EDITOR LIZ ELLIOT



THIS PAGE The side opening to the adjacent new corridor makes the sitting room seem larger than it is. OPPOSITE The corridor (above left) was formed from an outdoor passageway; it now leads to a cloakroom (below right). The nineteenth-century Chinese prints above the fireplace (above right) are inherited pieces, while the Turkish rug (below left) was found in Ludlow





THIS PAGE The former garden shed has been replaced with a new outbuilding, used as a study. OPPOSITE CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT The panelling in the main bedroom was copied from the original in the adjoining cottage. The bathroom was divided to create an en-suite shower room for the main bedroom. Fabric from John Lewis was used for the blinds and bedcover in a spare room. The original front door is no longer in use; the door to the right opens into the new corridor

somewhere where entertaining on a relatively lavish scale could take place without fuss or drastic rearrangement. Sliding doors between the sitting room and kitchen – something of a Hackett Holland speciality – were the answer, designed to disappear seamlessly into a wall pocket between the two spaces.

How the kitchen should look was high on the list. ‘What I didn’t want,’ says Susanna, ‘was a kitchen you could eat in; I needed a dining room you could cook in.’ And today she has it – a room with a handsome antique dresser the length of one wall, balanced by specially designed painted units on the other. In the centre is a round table with extending leaves. As Johnny notes, ‘A round table in a small space is much better than a rectangular one; you can seat far more people around it, and it is altogether more congenial.’ A former outhouse, incorporated into the new layout, became an additional kitchen workspace as well as a storage area and garden tool repository, and the kitchen itself opens directly into the restful, green courtyard, dominated by a flourishing mulberry tree – and leading to what was once the shed.

The once-unpromising wooden shed – ‘a horrible space’ – was replaced with what is now Charles’s retreat: a ‘gentleman’s study’, with all the peace and privacy that he could desire. It also serves as an eye-catcher from the main house,

drawing the eye outwards and giving the impression that the house and garden are far larger than they are.

Upstairs, too, everything has been done to make a generous, efficient, light-filled space. Roof lights illuminate the corridor, off which there are three bedrooms and two bathrooms, a single large bathroom having been cut in two to make an en-suite walk-in shower for the principal bedroom and a luxurious bathroom that serves the two spare rooms. ‘It’s amazing what you can get into a bathroom, with careful planning,’ says Johnny. ‘You never need a room as large as you think.’ The simple panelling in the corridor and main bedroom was taken – almost literally – by Johnny from the original, some of which is still on the walls of the next-door cottage. He copied it ‘down to the last millimetre’ and reproduced it in plywood. The panelling also hides the jib door that leads up to the low-ceilinged loft, which has been made into a play area for their grandchildren.

This was a harmonious project from start to finish, with Johnny and Susanna agreeing on almost everything – and the result is as peaceful, comfortable and fresh as you’d expect from such a pleasing consensus of opinion □

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CONTRIBUTORS



JOHNNY HOLLAND

Architect

Johnny Holland's trajectory towards a career in architecture began when he was 'bitten by the building bug' on his father's building sites. He went on to work for Patrick Baty of Papers and Paints, before training as an apprentice with architect Demetri Porphyrios and then working with conservation practitioner Peregrine Bryant. Johnny and his wife, Jane Hackett, set up Hackett Holland in 2001. Inspired by Palladio and Lutyens, he describes his style as 'rooted in vernacular and classical traditions, but eclectic and responsive to place and to brief'.

The house Johnny designed on page 70 neatly encapsulates his motto:

'There is always a way to squeeze it in.'

RACHEL WHITING

Photographer

Even as a young girl Rachel Whiting was rarely without her camera - 'I have always looked forward to finding out what was round the next corner,' she explains. This edition of *House & Garden* is a case in point. Rachel's photographs illustrate three very different stories: a colourful flat in the Barbican (page 108), a luxurious house in Regent's Park (page 80), and Gabby Deeming's patterned decoration shoot (page 96). Travelling to beautiful locations across the globe is a routine and much-loved part of the job for Rachel and is something that informs her 'inherent aesthetic of simplicity, shape, colour and form'.



FI COTTER CRAIG AND ZEBEDEE HELM

Television producer and artist/writer

Fi Cotter Craig and Zebedee Helm's new book *The Middle Class ABC* runs the gamut of British middle-class 'manners and mores'. The same concoction of witty and irreverent observations is played out over pages 102-107, where the pair run through an A to Z of the trappings of Christmas. Hailing from 'Scottish Presbyterian stock', Zebedee - who also illustrates the *House & Garden* Editor's letter page - knew he 'wanted a life of pain and suffering, so art and writing seemed to fit the bill perfectly'; meanwhile Fi claims to be able to 'manage only about five sentences in succession, so really thank-you letters and the odd observation are the limit.' This commission was approached with 'joy, gusto and amazement'. And their next project? 'It's so hot that our agent has sworn us to secrecy' □

