

A welcome

The FACTS

Who? Eamonn and Fiona Agha, and their toddler
What? 1980s purpose-built flat
Where? Kensington, west London
Cost? Around £100,000
Time? 12 weeks

The new herringbone flooring from Hawwoods adds a richness to the kitchen and enhances the timeless look of the cabinetry by Devol.

right The dining table and bench, which tucks neatly underneath, are from Barker & Stonehouse. The black floor lamp is from Made and matches one at the other end of the living room. Chairs, Barker & Stonehouse.

return

Not too traditional, but not too contemporary: somewhere in between. That was the brief for this apartment that'd been rented out for years before Eamonn and Fiona Agha moved back in >

Words: Alison Davidson Photography: Jody Stewart





The white ceramic **sink**, from Reginox, coordinates with the **worktop**, from Marble City.

below Despite a small space, Eamonn managed to include a **range cooker** with a **cooker hood** above, both from Smeg, and plenty of storage to one side of the room as part of the L-shape layout.



With five windows in the living-diner, the space is light and airy. The colour palette of blue and grey carries throughout the apartment for a cohesive feel. **Corner sofa**, Made; **flooring** Hawwoods. Eamonn and Fiona designed the **coffee table** themselves. It features a tile inlay top that can be easily changed.

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“I decided it was time to RENOVATE. NOTHING STRUCTURAL, PURELY COSMETIC, *BUT* as with all these things, I ENDED UP DOING MORE THAN I HAD PLANNED.”

“I had owned this flat for some time, and had been renting it out, before I moved back in,” says Eamonn Agha, who owns Huntsmore Design & Build. He shares his home with wife Fiona, a teacher, and their toddler. “Because it had been rented out for so long, it was looking a bit shabby, and hadn’t really been updated since it was built in the 1980s. I decided to upgrade each of the rooms, including the kitchen, living-diner, bedrooms and bathrooms.”

Initially the flat was rewired, replastered, and the heating system upgraded before Eamonn tackled the kitchen. “Our property is on the first floor of the block, with all the other flats above it,” he explains. “And we had all the pipework for the building – seven floors of it – directed through the corner of our kitchen, so we couldn’t remove them. We had to be clever about how we redesigned the kitchen to disguise them.” The first job was to take out the washing machine and dryer – they are now housed in a cupboard in the hallway instead.

Eamonn approached Devol for the kitchen as he felt the cabinetry style was neither too traditional or too modern, a notion key to his and Fiona’s redesign brief. “I’ve worked with Devol in many of my company’s design and build projects – I like the quality and think the Shaker style, painted in Hague Blue from Farrow & Ball, worked well for the look we wanted,” he says. “From there, Fiona and I decided on a blue and grey palette for the whole flat.” An L-shape layout was created for the compact space, including a range cooker on one side and the sink on the other by the window. A wall unit near the window hides the pipework and Eamonn was able to include more units for storage in the space formerly occupied by the laundry appliances. He also changed the floor to something more traditional – wood laid in a herringbone pattern. “It was tiled before, but I think this works so much better with the style of the flat now,” he says. The coving in the kitchen was updated, too, and carried through to the rest of the apartment for continuity. “The existing design was faux Victorian, but I selected an Art Deco style – I know it’s not the period of the building, but the simple lines work well with the overall aesthetic.”

Next, Eamonn reconfigured the bathrooms. In the guest space, he wanted a back-to-the-wall WC so the cistern had to be concealed. As the soil pipe was in the way, he specified a false wall to hide both, then created an alcove in the middle with a mirror behind to make the room appear bigger, with a shelf that could be used for accessories and plants. Contemporary sanitaryware from Duravit has been paired with classic metro wall tiles and a patterned design for the floor.

The ensuite, leading off the master bedroom, is more luxurious. It features marble tiles with a large walk-in shower. “We had the tiles cut especially into a herringbone shape for the floor and chose wall-mounted sanitaryware to have some variation from the other bathroom,” Eamonn explains. “To soften the overall look and offset the marble, which I think can feel quite cold, we installed reclaimed wooden shelves.” For the adjoining master bedroom, the task was simpler and involved updating the decor. “We were limited in what we could do, but had it replastered and painted in to freshen it up. The shutters add the finishing touch.”

The living-diner area was also redecorated, with new flooring from Hawwoods – a planked design in a deep cherry colour. “As there are a lot of windows, the room is lovely and light – but there isn’t a lot of wall space for radiators, so we chose two slim, gunmetal designs at either end of the space,” Eamonn says. “Again, I went for pale grey on the walls, and bought a navy blue corner sofa which was teamed with a vintage leather armchair Fiona and I found in an antique shop and a chunky dining table and bench seating.

Now that it’s finished? “It’s such an overused word, but the flat does have a timeless feel to it,” Eamonn says. “The renovation was straightforward, I suppose since I’m used to doing projects, and enjoyable. It was nice to do something less taxing and on my own timeframe for change.” >



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design edit

1 Barbro dark wood tripod floor lamp with black Dorette shade, £75, Iconic Lights. iconiclights.co.uk 2 Astute vertical single DR035 aluminium radiator, from £294, Vogue UK. vogueuk.co.uk 3 Baxter left-hand corner sofa in navy blue, £1389.99, My Furniture. my-furniture.com 4 Claire Gaudion Zala denim rug, £399, Hemming & Wills. hemmingandwills.co.uk 5 White shutters, £299 per sq m, Shutterly Fabulous. shutterlyfabulous.com



A tall, slim gunmetal radiator, for similar, try Vogue UK, fits neatly onto the wall at the back of the room, with a telephone table, from Made, next to it.



Eamonn and Fiona bought an ottoman bed, from Made, for extra storage. Headboard, Made; paint, Paint & Paper Library.

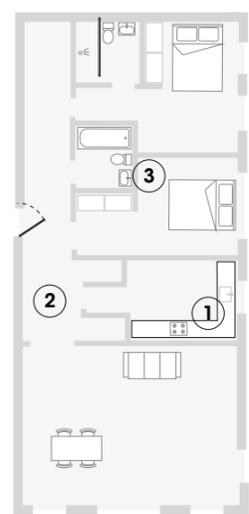


The couple wanted a luxurious feel in the ensuite, so chose marble tiles from Marble City. He had the floor tiles cut into a herringbone shape. Shower enclosure, Bette; sanitaryware, Catalano; brassware, Axor.

The PLANS

The layout of the apartment remained the same, but the rooms were updated with a modern décor, including a new kitchen.

- 1 **Pipework** This had to be disguised in the new kitchen, so a wall cabinet was installed to hide everything inside.
- 2 **Laundry appliances** A bespoke cupboard in the hallway houses the washing machine and dryer, which also freed up valuable floor area in the kitchen.
- 3 **Concealed cistern** To hide this and the soil pipe for the WC in the ensuite, a false wall was created.



SOURCEBOOK

Design Huntsmore Design and Build 020 7484 5745 huntsmore.com
Kitchen Devol 020 3837 5900 devolkitchens.co.uk
Worktop Marble City 020 8871 1191 marblecity.co.uk
Sink Reginox 01260 280033 reginox.co.uk
Tap Hansgrohe hansgrohe.co.uk
Oven, range cooker, and extractor Smeg 0344 573 5573 smeg.com
Flooring Hawwoods 01524 737000 hawwoods.com
Shutters The New England Shutter Company 020 8675 1099 thenewenglandshuttercompany.com
Tiles Marble City, as before; Fired Earth firedearth.com;
Sanitaryware Catalano catalano.co.uk; Duravit 020 7253 3559 duravit.co.uk
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