

OLD SPACE

Right The bathroom had not been changed in around 17 years, so its fixtures and fittings were starting to look worn and in need of an update

FACT FILE

THE OWNERS

Holly Dorling (below), who is a partner in floristry business Flower, lives here with her partner Andrew Johnson, an investments manager

THE PROPERTY

A detached four-bedroom modern house

THE LOCATION

Near Wantage, Oxfordshire

WHAT THEY SPENT

The couple's bathroom project cost around £17,650

BEFORE



WALL STORAGE

Below A niche has been recessed into the new stud wall next to the bath, with Marron mosaic tiles supplied by Instil Design adding interest



DESIGN TIP

For a truly frameless glass shower screen, make sure that you fix the u-section metal track to the walls and floor ahead of tiling so that it is concealed

NEW SPACE

The bath surround has been tiled in Moleanos Classic beige honed limestone to match the stud wall and the shower area. A strip of LEDs beneath this surround provides ambient lighting. Instil Design provided all the fixtures and fittings, including the Adamsez bath and No Code WC

'We chose a timeless design to last for years to come'

Holly Dorling and Andrew Johnson took inspiration from natural materials and neutral shades to create their stylish bathroom with walk-in shower

WORDS JO MESSENGER PHOTOGRAPHS FRASER MARR

Andrew and I live in the village we both grew up in,' says Holly. 'Our home is in a really pretty location with a good proximity to London, and near to where I run a floristry business with my mother. Andrew was already living in this house when I first met him, and when we

decided to live together, we saw no reason to move anywhere else.'

Built in the 1990s, the property had been remodelled over time before the couple moved in. 'However, the bathroom had been fitted 17 years ago, so it was looking very worn and more than a little dated,'

Holly continues. 'It was definitely the right time to give it an upgrade.'

The first floor of the property is built in the eaves of the roof, so the rooms at the front have dormer windows, while those at the back are fitted with rooflights. The existing bathroom had a slightly unusual

layout, with the bath squeezed in between the shower and slope of the wall, but Holly was keen to see if it could be re-sited beneath the window. 'We met up with designer Martina Landhed of Instil Design and asked her to help us with some ideas to transform the room,' says Holly. 'We wanted a classic, timeless look that would last for at least another 17 years.'

Martina visited the house with Kevin Robertson, who installs a lot of the projects she works on. When he looked in the adjoining bedroom, Kevin noticed that the

wall under the window was set further back. The studwork for the bathroom wall had been brought forward further into the room, probably to gain head-height for the WC that had been positioned there. Kevin explained that if they took the studwork wall out and set it further back, they could position a new bath beneath the window. In fact, he was able to move it back by 40cm, also freeing up space for the large walk-in shower that the couple longed for.

'This has made such a difference to the overall look,' says Holly. 'There was only

one space where we could fit the shower, and we wanted it to be really roomy.'

With the new layout agreed, Holly worked with Martina on the design and Andrew gave her free rein on the scheme. The couple had already discussed a few ideas and luckily have very similar tastes. 'Neither of us like anything "gimmicky" and we both wanted a combination of natural stone and wood for a stylish but understated look,' explains Holly. 'As it turned out, Martina suggested a lot of things that we had already been thinking

SHOWER ENCLOSURE

Instil Design supplied the bespoke glass panels and the Hansgrohe Raindance showerhead. A recessed area in the wet room-style shower is ideal for storing toiletries, while a stud wall acts as shelving. Above this, the walls are painted in Dimity by Farrow & Ball



NATURAL FINISHES

Below The Finesse walnut wood cabinets, shelving and vanity unit, all by Stonearth, are the perfect complement to the stone floor and wall tiles. Creating a stepped effect means the wall cabinets fit beneath the sloping ceiling



about. Once she understood us, she got the design spot on – by coincidence she picked out a paint colour for the walls that we had already decided on, and when she showed us some sample grout colours, we instinctively chose the same neutral shade.'

Holly wanted a sizeable vanity unit to store toiletries and bathroom essentials, but with their heart set on having a larger shower, Holly and Andrew had to be careful that the unit wasn't too big for the space. 'I didn't care how good it looked, I didn't want it if it would mean having to shuffle in and out of the shower,' she says. 'Luckily, Martina found a design that was a perfect fit.'

It also proved difficult to find wall units for the space, as the sloping ceiling meant that a lot of cabinets either wouldn't fit or looked top-heavy over the bath. The staggered units and co-ordinating shelving not only provide additional storage space, but also add an interesting detail.

For the shower enclosure, the couple opted for simple glass panels to prevent water splashing on to the floor while giving an open, light feel to the space. Kevin was able to fix the panels into the

walls and floor before the tiling was finished so there was no need for bracing bars to hold them up. 'As Andrew is more than six feet tall, we asked Martina to make the glazed panels higher than normal, to stop the spray going over the top when he washed his hair,' says Holly.

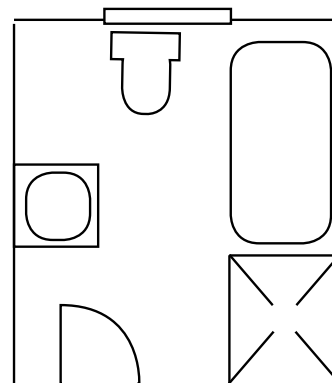
A wet room look was also created successfully. 'Other builders had told Holly and Andrew that they couldn't have a wet room-style shower tray and had to choose a raised design, similar to their old one,' says Kevin. 'Although it was a fiddly job, we were able to sink the plumbing in between the joists.'

For the finishing touches, Holly and Andrew chose a stunning marble top for the vanity unit to co-ordinate with the mosaic inset tiles, and overhead and ambient lighting so that the room benefits from a relaxed, calming atmosphere in the evening. 'They are on separate switches so we can choose between them,' says Holly. 'We've ended up with everything we originally wanted in the bathroom: a better layout, a large shower and clever lighting, so I can read my book in the bath without glare from above. It's perfect.'

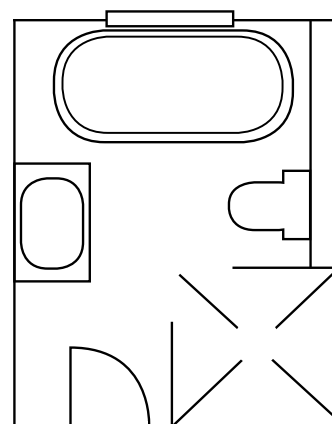
We now have all that we wanted: a better layout, large shower and clever lighting

THE PLANS

BEFORE



AFTER



Removing an existing stud wall created more space for a new bath and a larger shower area. A smaller stud wall has been built to conceal pipework and provide storage

THE CONTACTS

Flower 01235 832953,
Flower-ardington.co.uk
Bathroom design, fixtures and fittings
Martina Landhed, Instil Design, 0800
677 1040, Instil-design.co.uk
Construction and installation
K Robertson General Builders,
07812 093918

THE COSTS

Design, fixtures and fittings	£5,650
Installation and building work	£5,450
Brassware	£2,700
Tiles	£2,050
Heating	£1,300
Lighting	£500
TOTAL	£17,650

My project notes



Inspired by Holly Dorling's scheme? Use her ideas to help update your own bathroom

My money-saving tip

'We were originally going to choose high-end, branded sanitaryware, but our designer showed us similar designs from No Code that were made to the same specifications but were more affordable. Taking her advice on which products to use saved us a lot of money.'

Useful advice

'When our builder Kevin was working on the project, he asked us lots of questions about what we wanted from the space. I always asked him what he would choose if it was his space – after all, when it comes to bathrooms, he has far more experience than I have. Kevin gave us lots of ideas for the new design scheme, such as fitting a second strip of plasterboard above the tiles behind the bath so that they are flush to the wall.'

What I've learnt...

'Fitting a new bathroom has to be one of the messiest jobs in a house, and we're not in a rush to do it again. With that in mind, we went for a neutral look that wouldn't date too quickly. I didn't want patterned tiles or bright contemporary furniture that I would soon be fed up with. Plus, if we move, it is more likely to appeal to buyers.'

My design inspiration

'Friends and family often stay with us, so it was important that the scheme should be suitable for small children. It's a practical design, with a "lip" beneath the bath panel where the LED lighting is installed, so you can get nearer to the bath – it's great for lifting little children out after a bath. Older kids love the walk-in shower, and after use it needs only a quick wipe to keep it clean.'



Above Choosing an inexpensive suite will save money on the overall project. This K09 basin is from No Code

Right To enhance a scheme, display decorative items, such as these shells, on unused surfaces

Below By opting for a bespoke shower panel, Holly and Andrew could have a design tailor-made to suit their space and needs

