



Wiltshire Country House

KITCHEN

AS SEEN IN
COUNTRY HOMES & INTERIORS

FEATURE SHARON PARSONS
PHOTOGRAPHS RICHARD GADSBY

The HAPPY HOUSE

From the moment she set foot in this much-loved country house, Sarah Williamson-Jones knew this was the forever home she and her family had been looking for



Exterior

The addition of the new wing in contrasting flint stone has given the house a striking new aspect. Outdoor **sofa** and **ottoman**, Garden Trading

Kitchen

Running the entire length of the new wing's ground floor, this room includes a separate walk-in larder and cooking space, dining and seating area. Bespoke Shaker-style kitchen, handmade by Thomas & Thomas; painted in Inchyra Blue by Farrow & Ball. Lights, Jim Lawrence



“I COULD SEE EXACTLY WHAT WE NEEDED TO DO TO CREATE THE HOME WE WANTED WITHOUT DISTURBING THE ESSENTIAL CHARACTER OF THE HOUSE”

Blossoming apple trees in front of a half-hidden house were what first intrigued Sarah and David Williamson-Jones. ‘We were living nearby and often drove past, but it was difficult to get more than a glimpse of the actual property,’ Sarah says. When they did stop to take a proper peek, they were so taken with the country house they wrote to the owners explaining that should the house ever be sold, they would be interested. ‘We got a letter back from a lady who explained her mother lived there, but if things changed, she would get in touch. Ten months later, that’s exactly what happened,’ says Sarah.

The family went along to view the property and the moment they entered, they were sold. ‘We had no doubt this was the family house we’d been looking for,’ says Sarah. ‘It just felt right.’ But first, the family were vetted by the old lady herself, who was moving to a residential home after living in the house for almost 60 years. ‘She wanted to be sure we would love it just as much as she and her family had,’ recalls Sarah. ‘She was also a keen plantswoman, and when I told her that I too had a passion for flowers, we clicked.’

By the time the family moved in a few months’ later, ambitious plans were already in place. The main thrust of the work was to be a brand new wing for an expansive kitchen and living space, with a generous master suite above. There would also be an expanded entrance hall, and a gentle re-configuration of the original layout to make it more practical and cohesive.

‘Everywhere needed a complete overhaul – from new windows to wiring, heating and plumbing, and of course, the décor. That essentially meant living on a building site for several months, but we decided to tough it out!’ That proved to be an understatement when, in the winter of 2018, the Beast from East brought blizzards and freezing temperatures. ‘We basically set up camp in the existing kitchen and the only heat came from the trusty old Aga.’

As the months went by, the new bones of the house started to take shape. Alongside the imposing new wing, the expanded entrance hall was given an extra dimension by simply removing an interior wall separating it from the oak-panelled dining room. ‘The panelling is such a wonderful feature, we wanted it to be appreciated every day.’

Finally, Sarah was able to turn her attention to the décor. ‘It had to be in tune with the original house, but with a few contemporary touches,’ she explains. ‘My aim was to make it feel calm and cohesive, with a few shots of pattern and colour to give it personality.’ This has been achieved with a subtle palette, classic patterns and tactile fabrics. A combination of antique finds, family heirlooms and treasured objects sits comfortably together, and Sarah has done her best to incorporate as many of the property’s original features as possible, from the old scullery sink, now in the utility room, to the servants’ bells in the hall.

She and her family could not be more content. ‘We’ve put our own stamp on this house,’ she says, ‘but I think it has the same warm atmosphere we felt on the day we walked in. This is a happy house, and it’s a joy to live here.’

**AT HOME WITH**

Owners Sarah Williamson-Jones owns Pod & Pip (podandpip.co.uk), a floristry and homewares business, and lives here with her surveyor husband, David, and two daughters, Tess, 14, and Georgie, 11. The family has a black labrador called Minnie.

House A five-bedroom 1920s country house, with a new wing built in 2018.



Kitchen
An informal seating area at the far end of the kitchen (left) incorporates a woodburning stove to keep the whole room extra toasty during the winter months. **Console table**, Oka. **Armchair**, Rossiters of Bath. **Table and chairs**, Neptune

Back hall
Masculine oak furniture is tempered with vintage flower prints, a comfy wing chair and pretty floral cushion.

Dining room
This oak-panelled space with its beautifully worn oak floorboards has been opened up on one side so it can be fully appreciated from the hallway. Sarah chose the **dining chairs** from Coach House in a light upholstery to lift the dark scheme.



Snug

This space - originally the kitchen in the main house - is a cosy retreat for all the family. Favourite old chairs have been reupholstered to complement the scheme. **Walls** painted in Oval Room Blue, Farrow & Ball. **Curtain fabric**, Moon



“I APPROACH DECORATING IN THE SAME WAY I ARRANGE FLOWERS - THINKING PRIMARILY ABOUT COLOUR AND TEXTURE. IT'S THE SAME PRINCIPLES”

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