



KITCHEN
As the couple are both tall, the floor units are 3cm higher than standard. Joinery, £15,700; quartz worktops, £4,584, Bath Kitchen Company. Ava green bar stools, £80 each, Atlantic Shopping



FAMILY ROOM
'Buying our furniture bespoke from local suppliers meant it was better quality and not much more expensive than ready-made pieces,' says Rebecca. Sofas and footstool, £3,400, Bath Sofa & Curtain Company. Lack side table, £5; Jära lampshade, £7.50; Umfors table lampshade, £9, all Ikea

THE REAL DEAL



REPLANNED

HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY

Detached 1920s house

LOCATION

Bath

ROOMS

Hall, sitting room, dining room, kitchen/family room, breakfast area, play room, utility room, cloakroom, larder, four bedrooms (one en suite), two bathrooms. Separate coach house annexe in garden

PURCHASED

2013

PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'Before moving here we had a five-bedroom terrace in southwest London,' says Rebecca.

Neutral tones, vibrant fabrics and traditional furniture give an authentic feel to Rebecca and Steven Hourston's period home

FEATURE VICTORIA JENKINS | PHOTOGRAPHY WILLIAM GODDARD



SITTING ROOM
Rebecca wanted warm, earthy tones for a relaxing feel in here. Sofas from £1,600 each, Bath Sofa & Curtain Company. Candy Bean large rug in Autumn, £270; Chenille Diamonds and Chenille Stripe cushions, £10 each; Santiago Washed Urn table lamps, £40 each, all Dunelm



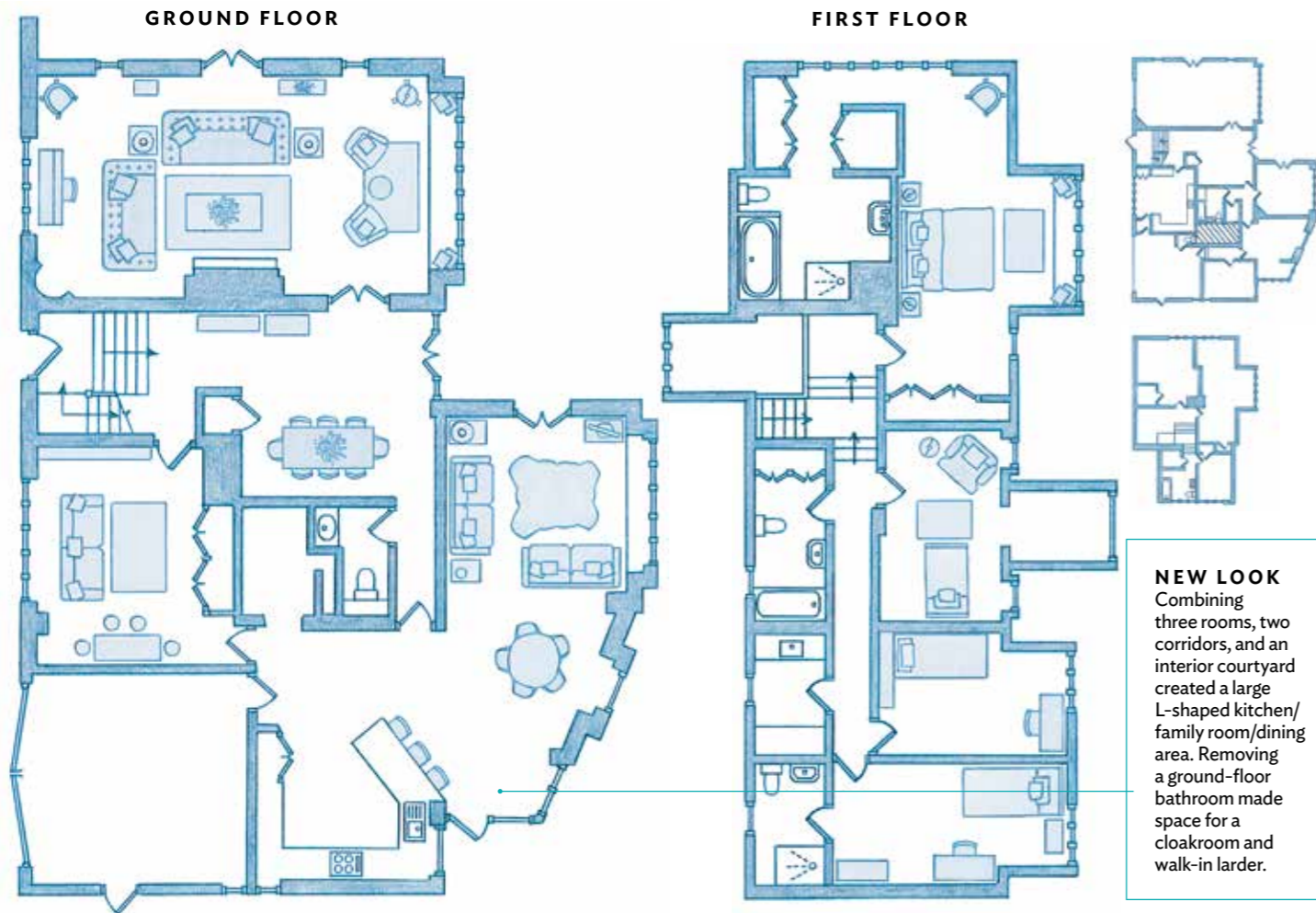
BREAKFAST AREA

Apple green for fabrics and seating gives a fresh look, and reflects the garden.

Circle oak dining table, £1,520, Adventures in Furniture. Cushioned Eames-style green dining chairs, £65 each, Atlantic Shopping. Dandelion Puff blinds, £78m, Fabrics & Papers. Large green cut-out pendant light, £22, Dove Mill

AFTER

BEFORE



NEW LOOK
Combining three rooms, two corridors, and an interior courtyard created a large L-shaped kitchen/family room/dining area. Removing a ground-floor bathroom made space for a cloakroom and walk-in larder.



Moving from London to Bath was a big but necessary step for Rebecca and Steven Hourston. 'We wanted more space and a quieter life for our sons Callum, 8, Jamie, 6, and Alex, 2,' says Rebecca.

They found their large detached 1920s house through friends of friends and Rebecca was charmed by it from the first viewing. 'There was a wonderful jangly brass bell at the door, then steps down into a spacious hall that led all the way through to the back garden – which was an explosion of colour,' says Rebecca. 'The outdoors was on two levels, with amazing views across Bath, and we could hardly believe the fantastic contrast with our London terrace.'

Some of the large light-filled rooms were panelled, and the house had many other original features. To the Hourstons' delight, it had everything on their wish list, including separate study space and even proximity to a swimming pool. 'There was an old

coach house in the garden and it's where we have our offices,' says Rebecca.

When planning how to rework the layout, the couple wasted no time. 'Instead of living there at first, we applied for and received planning permission before we'd even bought it,' says Rebecca. 'With three boys, we didn't want to wait. We planned a two-bedroom extension above the single-storey west end of the house, and our architect persuaded us to knock three rooms, two corridors and an internal courtyard into one big kitchen-diner/sitting area. We also reconfigured two more rooms to create our master en suite. At one point, the house was just a gutted shell with a pile of rubble in it.'

During the work, the family lived in the coach house, which had a bathroom and kitchenette. 'The building took seven months and the finishing another year,' says Rebecca. 'This included a new kitchen, installing built-in storage, and then the painting.'

'Our policy was to spend on the kitchen and the flooring and save on furniture and

finishing touches,' she continues. 'We reused as many period fittings as possible such as the panelling, round wooden doorknobs and a 1920s washbasin. Keeping the character was very important – but we did commit heresy by giving the Aga to my parents and buying double ovens and an induction hob instead.'

Fitting new ovens wasn't the only concession to modern living. The house also had to be rewired, replastered, and new doors and windows were installed. 'We were disappointed at having to replace the original folding garden doors, but they were rotten,' says Rebecca. 'And although we'd wanted to sand and polish the original pine flooring in the hall and lounge, we were so pleased with the new engineered oak in the kitchen, we carried it on through the whole ground floor.'

Now the family are settled, they couldn't be happier to have made the move to the country. 'We love living here, especially the boys,' says Rebecca. 'When we first arrived, they didn't know how to climb the apple tree in the garden – but now, we can't stop them.'



INSPIRATION 'We made a mood board using interior websites and interiors magazines to inspire our thinking'



JAMIE'S BEDROOM
The den in the eaves is accessed by wooden block steps. Bespoke bunk bed and steps, Kingman Joinery. Canvas storage cubes, £17 each, Great Little Trading Company



PLAYROOM
A magnetic plaster wall is a clever way to exhibit the boys' drawings. Thistle magnetic plaster, £96.99 for a 2.5kg bag, Wickes. Tåstrup rug, £35, Ikea



ALEX'S BEDROOM
This bespoke triangular window was the ideal solution for an awkward space. Walls painted in Khaki Mists 4 paint mixing silk, £24.49 for 2.5 litres, Dulux. Anna toddler bedstead, £120, John Lewis



MASTER BEDROOM
The couple moved back the wall behind the bed and an exterior wall beneath the eaves to create an illusion of space. Mirror, £9, The Range. Walls painted in Slipper Satin estate emulsion, £38 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball



BATHROOM
Stone finishes add a touch of luxury. Ecu tumbled marble flooring, £55sq m; wall tiles, £45.60sq m; walnut tumbled travertine mosaic tiles, £102.55sq m, all Mandarin Stone