

INSPIRING



HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY

Victorian former worker's cottage

LOCATION

Southwest London

ROOMS Sitting room, kitchen, playroom, utility room, cloakroom, four bedrooms (two en suite), bathroom

PURCHASED 2012

PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'We lived in a Victorian terrace in Fulham,' says Kristina.

GARDEN

Kristina created an Italian-style terrace using sandstone tiles and box plants. 'I've ordered a jasmine climber and plan to add some quirky pots and colourful plants, too,' she says.

Maze Rattan Winchester Square armchair set, from £1,599, Select Furnishings. Sophia farmhouse kitchen table, £1,425, Oka



PRIME LOCATION

Kristina Kennedy found a rundown Victorian house in the perfect street and turned it into a stylish family home

KITCHEN

This is a sophisticated space for entertaining, and can be closed off from the adjoining sitting room with sliding doors if required.

Spitalfield kitchen with satin chrome hinges and honed Carrara marble worktops, from £40,000, Plain English. Menton hanging lights, from £1,262 each, Vaughan



Relocation agent Kristina Kennedy helps clients all over the world to buy and rent properties in London. So it's no surprise that when it came to searching for her own home a couple of years ago, she had her finger firmly on the pulse. As soon as she heard about a Victorian cottage on the exact street she had her eye on, Kristina made an offer before it even came onto the market.

'The house was dark, dated, damp and needed some work,' she reflects. 'But this is a fun, buzzy neighbourhood, close to cafés, shops and green spaces.' Kristina hired a project manager and an architect/interior designer to rework the layout and create a loft bedroom and new basement. Being Scandinavian-born, she is used to light and airy living. 'English properties tend to lack utility space and storage, which I'm obsessed with,' she says. 'I had the basement dug out so it could incorporate a wine cooler, a cupboard for airing clothes, coat and boot storage, plus a playroom for my son, Archie, 10.'

Extending into the loft required some creative thinking. Strict planning constraints meant no

DESIGN TIP 'I get bored by pieces that look too well matched, so I enjoy mixing antique with modern. It takes bravery to combine them, but it's worth it'

street-facing dormers were permitted, so to add head height, the property's first floor had to be lowered. 'During the build I was petrified by the number of mice running around and the whole house looked like a muddy garden,' recalls Kristina, who rented a flat nearby and checked on progress daily. On one such visit she made a remarkable discovery in the bathroom. 'When the builders were chipping out the walls, they found a beautiful hand-carved gun, complete with a jammed bullet,' she says. 'The police believe it dates back to World War II. There's nothing like unearthing a secret in the walls of your home!'

When it came to the interiors, Kristina created a warm but restful atmosphere, decorating the sitting room, her bedroom and Archie's room in subtle greys enlivened with occasional splashes of bold colour. These soft grey tones continue in the kitchen, which has been extended with both entertaining and practicality in mind.

'Electronic windows and special glass panels keep the room from getting too hot in summer,' says Kristina. 'I enjoy hosting weekend lunches and we often have people to stay. I love it when friends pick up their glasses and hang out in the kitchen while I'm cooking. To me, that's a sign of a happy home.'

MASTER BEDROOM

Kristina chose a subtle blue-grey for the walls, adding deeper colours with her furniture and accessories. Walls painted in Mizzle estate emulsion, £36 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball. Large Gustavian bench stool in Gustavian Grey, from £1,555, Nordic Style



BATHROOM

The large mirror adds the illusion of space here.

Valencia Moonstone tiles, £164.47sq m, Fired Earth. WL 1212 taps, price on application, Lefroy Brooks



GUEST EN SUITE

This pale space exudes calm.

The renovation was managed by contractor Oliver Steele-Perkins (07976 339339, steele-perkins.com) and architect and interior designer Sue Cambie (07815 913058, scd-design.com)



SITTING ROOM

A red sofa and touches of yellow and gold add warmth to the cool grey scheme.

Bespoke sofa in Colefax and Fowler Layton Red, £2,843, I & JL Brown. Studio wingchair in charcoal, from £495, An Angel At My Table, would suit this space



ARCHIE'S BEDROOM

Bespoke cabinetry makes good use of the awkward area under the mansard roof.

Roman blinds in Matchbox fabric, £43m, Andrew Martin