



SITTING ROOM
Grey sofas were chosen to hide any marks or spills. Balzac sofas are available to buy from SCP. Fab Love cushions, £76.50 each, Jan Constantine. The Hobbs mirror, from £1,294, Julian Chichester, is a similar style

AS SEEN IN
25 BEAUTIFUL
HOMES



REPLANNED

HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY
Farmhouse built in the 1750s

LOCATION Hampshire

ROOMS Hall, sitting room, dining room, kitchen/breakfast room, family room, utility room, snug, conservatory, five bedrooms (two en suite), bathroom

PURCHASED 2002

PREVIOUS PROPERTY
'Before we moved in together, Sandy had a house in west London and I lived in east London,' says Caitlin.

The house that grew

An extension to their old farmhouse in Hampshire gave Caitlin Russell and Sandy Duncan a tailor-made family home

FEATURE MAGGIE COLVIN | PHOTOGRAPHY NICHOLAS YARSLEY



When Caitlin Russell and her husband Sandy Duncan first spotted a pretty and rural farmhouse, they were delighted with its exterior and knew it would make the perfect family home. Located near to Southampton, the property benefits from idyllic views over 38 acres of grassy meadows,

but the inside of the property left them somewhat underwhelmed. 'It looked and felt institutional,' says Caitlin. 'The windows were swathed in swags and tails, while the walls featured coats of arms, tapestries and lethal-looking spears. It was dark, formidable and old fashioned.'

As the true state of the existing plumbing, wiring and patchy plasterwork came to light,

it became clear that the property needed more attention than first thought. Caitlin and Sandy decided to take their time, and years later, after the birth of their sons – Robert, 12, Archie, nine, Max, eight and Gus, six – Sandy met up with local designer, Mark Ward, to discuss ways to refresh the property. From that point on, the house underwent a dramatic transformation. 'Mark was an ►



SNUG
Once used as both a spit and a bread oven, the large inglenook now houses the family's logburning stove. Heal's sells Kartell Louis Ghost chairs by Philippe Starck, from £184 each



KITCHEN
'The cabinetry looks like it has been here forever, which is why we like it,' says Caitlin. Kitchen, price on application, Chalon

FAVOURITE FEATURE

'Light floods the new atrium dining room and makes it feel as though the sun is shining, even on a grey day'

DINING ROOM

This double-height space was designed by Mark Ward and installed by Vale Garden Houses.

Vision table, from £2,833, and Bladeback chairs, from £340 each, Berrydesign

architectural visionary,' recalls Sandy. 'Initially, we discussed the idea of incorporating another bedroom and a new kitchen, as well as modernising the existing bathrooms, but the job soon escalated.

'Mark had a bigger and better scheme in mind,' Sandy continues. 'He pointed out that the property lacked symmetry as it was L-shaped, with a rickety lean-to at the back. It

had been a working farm up to the 1990s and nothing had been done to it for decades.'

To make the house a more symmetrical shape without diminishing the light flow, Mark drew up plans to fill in the L shape, dividing the kitchen from the sitting room by installing a double-height glass atrium. The couple use this as a dining room, while above it sits a large bedroom and bathroom. Mark

also designed a new open-tread staircase to replace the original, which was dangerously steep and narrow.

For Caitlin, the task of redecorating and furnishing the property was appealing. 'I'd just completed a design course at Kensington and Chelsea College in London, so I couldn't wait to try out my new skills,' she says. 'I have fairly eclectic taste ►

AFTER

Mark Ward Associates
Architecture & Design
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GROUND FLOOR



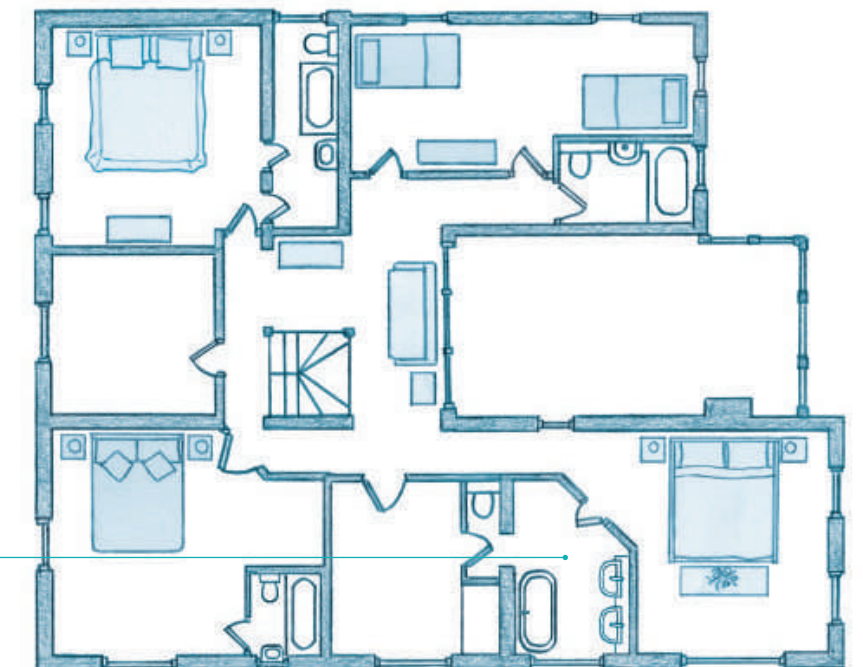
SITTING ROOM

Soft greys have been chosen for Caitlin and Sandy's stylish living space, which leads through to their new atrium dining room.

BEFORE



FIRST FLOOR



BATHROOM

Overlooking the atrium, this room was built along with a new bedroom. Two stone basins add a luxurious feel to the suite, which is lined with oak, from the walls to the floor.



LANDING

Rebuilding the staircase with a glazed balustrade allowed for additional seating. Not On The High Street sells cowhide rugs, from £230. Faux-fur throw, £149, Oka



GUEST BEDROOM

Checks and stripes in muted taupe and mink create a restful feel. Walls painted in Matchstick emulsion, £32.50 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball



BATHROOM

A modern-shaped freestanding bath takes pride of place. Double-ended bath, from a selection, Harlequin Bathrooms

and having lots of rooms to furnish meant there was plenty of scope for variety.'

With a large family, Caitlin opted for heavy-duty furnishings, including a chunky dining table and comfy sofas upholstered in dark fabrics. 'That doesn't mean we sacrificed a sense of style though,' she points out. 'Although the house often feels like Piccadilly Circus and I don't like to be

precious about interiors, I've still indulged in feminine touches here and there.'

The house, which dates back to the 18th century, is a far cry from its former life as two separate worker's cottages, before it became a logging farm. The family have inherited some striking period features, such as the large brick alcove in what was once the kitchen and is now a cosy snug. 'A hundred

years ago, the owners could roast a lamb on a spit inside the inglenook, but now we use it to house our woodburning stove,' says Caitlin.

'What I love about this home is how we've managed to combine period elements with contemporary features, such as the new atrium,' she continues. 'It's the type of place we always wanted and thanks to Mark we finally have our dream family home.' 25