

*‘Living in your own design is very special’*

Louise Luxton cleverly reconfigured her Victorian property in north London to meet her family’s modern needs

**FREESTANDING ISLAND UNIT**

Architect Martyn suggested floating units from Ikea with custom-sprayed fronts in the kitchen, which add to the feeling of spaciousness



*'We wanted to create a functional space with flair'*

← **EASY LIVING**

Extending out to the back of the house created plenty of room in the relaxed kitchen-dining area

→ **TROPICAL TOUCH**

Lush planting and colourful cushions from Kenzo Maison give the garden a holiday inspired atmosphere for Louise to unwind in. The stone used throughout the terrace is a silver-grey flamed granite from Checkalow

↘ **LIGHT FILLED**

Glazed sliding doors into the garden help to create a bright, sunny view, perfect for dining inside or out



**HOUSE DETAILS**

**HOMEOWNERS**

Louise Luxton, a hair and make-up artist, and her husband Steve, who works in banking  
**AGES** 40 and 44  
**FAMILY** Eddie, 2

**LOCATION** Crouch End, north London

**PROPERTY**  
 Four-bedroom Victorian end-of-terrace

**QUICK BUDGET BREAKDOWN**

<b>Construction, fit-out &amp; architect</b>	£185,000
<b>Flooring</b>	£10,000
<b>Kitchen &amp; appliances</b>	£40,000
<b>Bathrooms</b>	£10,000
<b>Furniture</b>	£30,000
<b>Garden landscaping &amp; planting</b>	£10,000

**TOTAL** £285,000

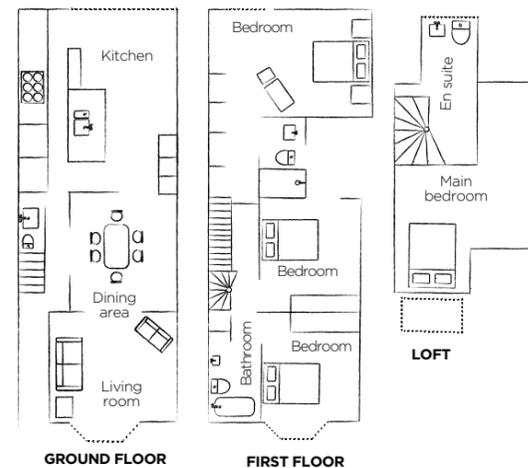
**PURCHASE PRICE**  
**£700,000**

**OUTLAY TO DATE**  
**£285,000**

**VALUED NOW AT**  
**£1.4M**

→ **VIEW THE FLOORPLAN**

To create a kitchen-dining-family space with a new master bedroom suite above, the ground and first floors have been extended. The front bedroom has been divided to make a family bathroom. A new room has been created in the loft



## IDEAS TO STEAL

Copy Louise's design touches to enhance your own interior



### ↑ RETRO CHIC

Sixties-inspired chairs with gentle curves work well with a solid wood traditional table



### ↑ ADDED CHARACTER

For the splashback, Checkalow's warm-toned metro tiles help to generate a cosy feel in the room



### ↑ UNIQUE ARTWORK

This striking sculpture by artist Philip Melling is the statement piece in the kitchen's living area



### PRACTICAL MINIMALISM

An elegant sink in the island helps to maximise the cooking and preparation space

**T**op of Louise and Steve Luxton's wish list when house hunting back in 2009 was a project in the desirable north London area of Crouch End. The market was crowded with eager buyers, so when this end-of-terrace Victorian house came up, the couple moved fast. From the start, they had an idea that the property's side return would allow them to create their dream of a large, open-plan kitchen, leading straight out to the garden. The project was a successful collaboration between the Luxtons and local architect Martyn Clarke, who came recommended by word of mouth. 'We worked well together and had a shared vision of what we were trying to achieve,' Louise says.

Martyn suggested continuing the extension on the first floor, to turn the back of the house from a bathroom and smaller bedroom into an impressive master suite. He advised the couple to create a family bathroom at one side of the large front bedroom, giving them three good-sized double bedrooms and two bathrooms. At the same time, they went into the loft to create a fourth bedroom or home office, although the height of the room is limited by the gable end of the roof. His design has a comfortable, tactile feel, with a great mix of natural materials and natural light. The overall look is relaxed, warm and well-suited to the practicalities of family life.

Waiting for planning permission took the full 12 weeks. Martyn and his team then went into action. As the house is built into a slight hill, one of the main tasks was ▶

### PLACE TO UNWIND

In the living room, a palette of calming stone shades, including the Roche Bobois sofa, is pepped up with bright Designers Guild curtains and Kenzo cushions





**RELAXED PALETTE**

Restful blues run throughout son Eddie's bedroom. The rug is from Great Little Trading Co and the checked curtains are from Designers Guild

**IDEAS TO STEAL**

Make the most of accessories in every room of the house

STOCKISTS  
Turn to page 181



↑ **USE ON-TREND FABRIC**  
Cushions in chevron prints and geometric patterns will add interest to a muted sofa



↑ **CONTINUE THE THEME**  
Match a large item on the bedside table with the colour scheme you've selected for your headboard



**AIRY EN SUITE**

Floating oak units, an inset mirror panel and a floor-to-ceiling glass screen help to maximise space in the couple's compact shower room

↑ **GO CLEAR**  
Transparent pendant ceiling lighting looks contemporary and works well in open-plan rooms

to dig out the ground level to achieve a continuous link with the garden. The back half of the kitchen and the garden itself were lowered to create the same floor level for the room and terrace. At the same time, the side of the kitchen and the garden wall were removed and rebuilt to create a room that took advantage of all the space right up to the perimeter of the property. Upstairs, a cleverly designed lightwell was created to allow the middle bedroom to retain its window.

To fuse the airy new kitchen with the rest of the house, Martyn opened up the back living room's former window area to create a floor-to-ceiling opening, made possible by an unseen RSJ.

While Martyn handled structure and layout, Louise came into her own with the interior colours and finishes. The kitchen was a joint effort: Martyn suggested floating units based on Ikea carcasses with custom-sprayed doors; Louise chose the colour,

Farrow & Ball's hardwick white, and white Corian worktop. The olive-coloured metro tiles came from Checkalow. 'I wanted to retain a period feel with a contemporary twist,' Louise says.

The kitchen-diner is a fusion of practical workspace, with concealed appliances and relaxing space. 'It was important for us to feel there was a natural flow from kitchen to outdoor living space, and the design of the floor-to-ceiling glass doors helps that,' Louise says.

Fabrics, from curtains, to throws and rugs, are hugely important to Louise. 'They help make a house a home,' she says. Also, most of the furniture was bought new, as their older pieces didn't work in the finished house.

The couple are absolutely delighted with the end result. 'Living in a house that you have designed from scratch is very special,' Louise says. 'We wanted to make the best use of light and create a functional family space with flair. I think we've achieved it.' GH

↑ **GENEROUS SPACE**

Extending over both floors supersized the back of the house to create a master suite with statement Cemia bed from Ligne Roset

