

Glazing brings the outside in

Gardening Gill Richardson, from Sea Mills-based Goodchild Interiors, shows how glazing can be used to spectacular effect, creating light and successfully joining outside and inside spaces

Residential projects, which form the majority of our work, are always exciting if we get to push the boundaries a little bit. This project was generous with time at the planning stage, so we were able to explore the design process fully and come up with some interesting ways of opening up the space.

Originally a row of cottages, this farm plot was developed in the 1970s and refurbished again in the 1980s, and was somewhat dated, with a warren of small rooms.

Our clients wanted to integrate the space into a practical family home that would take advantage of the rural West Country setting and the stunning views as well as bring it into the 21st century. The primary aim was to bring the outside into the building and create an open-plan living space that brought the family together.

It was important to work within the planning permissions and conservation constraints because of where the house was situated, and also to build upon the current footprint of the building. We also didn't want to destroy the feel of some of the original parts of the house, making it faceless and characterless.

The internal atrium shown in this photograph provides a spectacular heart of the home because it has the kitchen, dining area and office directly leading from the double height void.

The main adult living area can be accessed through double doors off the hallway and an internal frameless window allows visual access right through the building.

From the front drive, the evolution from the original cottages is still discernible and metal powder-coated windows fitted in the original openings continue the nod to the old. Inside and to the rear elevation, the building opens up to become bright and contemporary.

As soon as you open the heavy front door you can see down the hall to this open space and through to the wonderful garden, with ornamental pond, trees and woodland. The outside and inside feel intertwined and, as you



roam the house, both upstairs and downstairs, you are always aware of the views.

It was important that the glass sliding doors fitted snugly against the fixed panes when open and the tiled floor ran inside and out so that the two spaces flowed together. At night, automated blinds keep the coldness of dark glass at bay, though exterior lighting means the extensive garden view can be enjoyed long into the evening.

A simple palette of white units and slate grey worktops keep the lightness and reflectivity in the atrium area of the kitchen. The muted colours for the scheme complement all rooms of the house except the bedrooms, where the children chose stronger tones and funky details.

As the family is keen on cooking and hosting large family gatherings, the kitchen needed to be roomy enough to accommodate several people at once. It forms an L shape towards the utility and boot room by the back door and, with the units and appliances, lots of worktop space has been allowed for.

The rocking chair and client's own cherished items soften the effect of the glass and a wonderfully impressive, but delicate, pendant light (just out of view) means the view from the glass

balcony on the floor above is unhindered.

It was a remarkable project where we worked closely with the clients to achieve the finished look. We also return at intervals to re-visit rooms, such as the children's bedrooms, where we have altered decor and storage to take them into teenage years. But the house itself, and the structural openings we created, continue to capture the views of the dry-stone wall and the rural idyll of a beautiful bit of England.

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With her husband Paul Goodchild, Gill Richardson designs large-scale, medium and odd, teeny weeny spaces for residential interiors. Currently working on a Victorian castle in Glastonbury, a living room in Clifton and a new-build home, their projects are varied and eclectic. Their two-hour consultations for a one-off fee will get the most from even the tightest of budgets and challenging of spaces. Contact Gill on 0117 239 3486, or gill@goodchildinteriors.net, or visit www.goodchildinteriors.net.