

Mid-century modern

How do you keep a 1960s feel in a contemporary home? Ros Anderson admires one couple's clever use of retro touches. Pictures: Holly Jolliffe

This modern, stone-clad house was, before its renovation, an unprepossessing 60s box in a village outside Bristol, built into the side of a steep hill with views over an abandoned wildlife park. It needed some TLC: a glass bay window was sagging and a 70s extension had confused the layout. The kitchen was cold, dark and claustrophobic.

For owners Peter Flach and Lisa Lloyd-Flach, the contrast with their previous Victorian house was part of the draw. "It's hard to make your mark in a terrace," Flach says. "I grew up in a contemporary house in Holland that my parents built in 1967, so this felt natural. But I think it took Lisa a while to come around."

The brief to architects Goodchild Interiors (goodchildinteriors.net) was to make the house as usable and welcoming as possible. "They wanted to keep that 60s feel but with windows that don't leak and actually open," founder Gill Richardson says.

She ripped out the interior walls and floors, and started again. The kitchen was moved back next to the living space, with a large oval window cut into the connecting wall - a nod to the ubiquitous 60s serving hatch. The kitchen is painted retro orange - Charlotte's Locks by Farrow & Ball - which lifts the gunmetal-grey cabinets. The living room, with picture windows and a terrace, has a wood-burning stove by Danish company Morsø, and its walls are Manor House Gray by Farrow &

Ball. The sofas were a vintage find, upholstered in Culswick fabric from Designers Guild (designersguild.com). A dining table sits just outside the kitchen, complete with a PH lamp - for a more affordable design, try John Lewis's Zalo rise and fall pendant (johnlewis.com).

One of the most dramatic features is the stairwell: the first-floor landing is an oval, with walls and doors clad in purple tongue-and-groove cladding that matches the front door. With its adjoining doors closed, it's an intimate space. One leads into the master bedroom, complete with a glazed box bay window overlooking the countryside. The ground-floor bay was original to the house, but needed completely rebuilding, and the couple added the same feature directly above it. "The view is mesmerising," Flach says. "It's like living in a tree house. And our bedroom still feels private."

Upstairs, Flach's study - he is a professor of artificial intelligence - is another retro space, clad entirely in raw strawboard. The effect is both cosy and workmanlike. "The builders kept saying, 'When are you going to paint it?'" Richardson says. The copper lamps were vintage finds - for similar, try Tom Dixon's copper shades (tomdixon.net).

The finished home sticks closely to the intentions of the original, but with a modern, cosy feel. "We wanted it to be in keeping with the period," Flach says. "Now it feels as if it's always been like this."

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'The view from the bedroom is mesmerising. It feels like living in a tree house'



Retro vibe: Walls and floors were ripped out, and the bedroom (top) and living room (above) given glorious picture windows. The study (far left) now has strawboard walls; the landing (left) has purple tongue-and-groove