

# Property portfolio

## Home & garden

# Making a house a home

*Ever wondered how an interior design company works? Sarah Bellamy of Skinners of Tunbridge Wells, lets us in on the secrets of creating the perfect home for one of their clients*



### **The Property**

A substantial family house built circa 1901 in Georgian style on the site of an original Georgian property that was damaged by fire. Situated in a semi-rural, elevated position with stunning views over the surrounding countryside, the house benefits from all the features associated with a Georgian property – i.e. all the rooms are predominantly square with high ceilings, sash windows and solid-wood floors.

### **What was the brief from the owners?**

Our clients had decorated the property approximately 10-12 years ago and were looking to refresh and update the look whilst retaining certain pieces of their much-loved furniture. Consequently, being a period property, set in a semi-rural location, the brief was to retain the country feel whilst combining this with a more modern twist. For the sitting room, an elegant yet relaxed feel was requested, somewhere the whole family could have a place to sit comfortably.





For the bedroom, our clients requested that the room had a calm atmosphere, with green being the predominant colour, and that the curtains and blinds allowed no light to come through when drawn. The interconnecting gentleman's dressing room demanded a masculine feel, whilst complementing the décor of the main bedroom.

### ***Describe the process***

Our clients initially came in to our showroom in Castle Street, Tunbridge Wells, to look at fabrics. An appointment was then made for us to visit their home in order to fully understand and appreciate not only the age and character of the property, but also our clients' lifestyle and personality. We were then able to assemble an assortment of fabrics for upholstery, curtains and blinds from our extensive library of samples, as well as sourcing new pieces of bespoke furniture and designing the layout of the rooms. Our clients were incredibly decisive and from there it was all systems go.

### ***How much input did the owners have with the design?***

They were the perfect clients in that they had a good idea of the look they wanted to achieve and were both in agreement – it's slightly more difficult when partners don't share the same taste! We listened carefully to their brief and once we had a selection of fabrics, wallpapers and furniture to present to them, they made decisions immediately which made the process a lot easier to execute.

### ***Were their ideas easy to create?***

Having guidelines helped accelerate the design process. Our clients were completely happy to be guided by us and the scheme evolved very naturally.

### ***Was there anything they wanted to change?***

The only thing we changed was the furniture layout in the sitting room once all of the pieces were in situ. Some of the original pieces of furniture found homes in different areas of the rooms to best accommodate the new pieces. The end

result was a very harmonious, relaxed atmosphere, with no piece demanding too much attention. Brief fulfilled!

### ***How long did the project take?***

Four months from start to finish. This included all decorating, the renovation of the flooring, bespoke furniture, handmade curtains, blinds and upholstery.





### **What has been your most memorable project?**

Although involved in many diverse projects over the years, the most memorable to date involved the complete renovation of a luxury apartment with views over Hyde Park, owned by a very demanding overseas client. When completed, the apartment was luxurious and elegant in an effortless way, though the process was far from it!

### **What do you predict the next big trends will be for interior design?**

Whilst greys and neutrals are still very popular, we are seeing a welcome return to colour, with wallpaper enjoying a resurgence in popularity, not only as a feature wall but to decorate an entire room.



*If you're looking to make simple changes to soft furnishings, want some new curtains made or you're planning a radical refurbishment, Skinners of Tunbridge Wells can help you create the home of your dreams.*

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