

TOTAL COST
£3,641

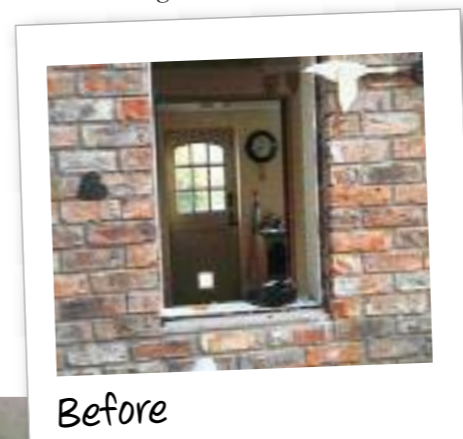
Kerrie and her children love how the new conservatory has opened up their home



I've created a family-friendly garden room

Kerrie Griffin-Rogers has transformed a small add-on conservatory by extending into a redundant room to create an open-plan, sun-filled space

When designer, Kerrie Griffin-Rogers, moved into her four-bedroom rural cottage in Shropshire, with her two children Jasmin and Hannah, she thought the existing compact brick and timber conservatory would be a real asset. 'The aim was to simply plaster the walls and make a pretty dining area, but once our family table was in place it was obvious that the space was just too small for our needs,' explains Kerrie. With two growing girls, and a love of entertaining, what Kerrie really wanted was a large informal space where family and friends could gather.



Before

STEP ONE Luckily for Kerrie the conservatory backed onto an underused utility room, so she hit upon the idea of relocating the washing machine to the downstairs cloakroom, then knocking down the dividing wall to make one large open-plan family area complete with dining and television spaces. 'As the wall I wanted to remove was the original outside wall of the cottage, I knew there would be structural work involved, but once the thought was in my head I just couldn't wait to get started,' recalls Kerrie. Having stripped the utility room herself, she called on the services of a trusted local builder to take on the messy job of demolishing the wall, adding a reinforced steel supporting joist and blocking up the old access to the utility. 'As an interior designer I am used to visualising rooms, but even I was surprised at the results, I still can't quite believe how much space I've gained by knocking two small rooms together,' says Kerrie.

STEP TWO Of course opening up the old utility room into the conservatory meant that it instantly felt lighter and brighter. However, keen to inject as much daylight as possible into the new space, Kerrie then



Good idea!

Smart made-to-measure wooden shutters not only provide shade during the summer months, but also ensure privacy from neighbours without restricting daylight.



persuaded her builder to replace the old utility door and window with a bank of fully glazed folding sliding doors. 'As we have a wrap around garden. I wanted to make the most of the views from both ends of the new room,' she explains. Kerrie opted for a ready-made set of pre-painted doors, and once in place, she hired an electrician to add extra electrical outlets for decorative wall lights and a wall-mounted television, before having the new room replastered throughout. 'I kept the existing overhead utility lighting as the recessed spots are quite discreet, whilst in the conservatory I simply replaced the old pendant fitting with a new chandelier,' she smiles. ▷

◀ The old utility room is now a light bright social space with uninterrupted views onto the garden beyond



The girls and their friends now love relaxing and watching their favourite programmes in the new room, thanks to the addition of a discreet wall-mounted television

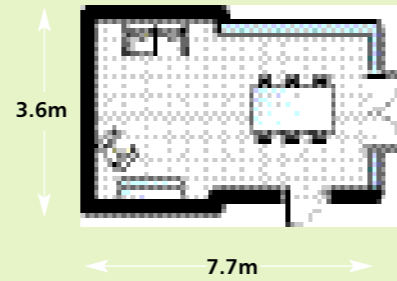
◀ **STEP THREE** With the major building work and alterations complete Kerrie could turn her attention to the décor of her new space. 'While I wanted a unified space I also wanted to subtly define the two separate functions of the room, so I opted for two shades of the same soft blue paint – which I think has worked very well,' explains Kerrie.

The entire floor area was then covered in a rustic natural seagrass, which, chosen to complement the garden, has proved surprisingly hard-wearing. When it came to dressing the large expanses of glazing, Kerrie recycled a pair of curtains for the folding doors, while wooden shutters adorn the conservatory windows. 'Unfortunately, I forgot to tell the shutter company to allow for new plasterboard when measuring up, so when they arrived to fit them, the shutters were slightly too wide,'

recalls Kerrie. 'But undeterred they neatly cut into the plasterwork and now fit perfectly.'

STEP FOUR As Kerrie runs her own online interiors company, adding those finishing touches was never going to be a problem. Having re-instated her original dining table and chairs in the enlarged dining area, she borrowed a comfy sofa and chair from the living room, and added the practical drawer unit originally destined for her website, along with the useful storage trunk and rug. Kerrie has also used her own wall lights and accessories to complete the look, and could not be happier. 'It's hard to believe that a few months ago this was all wasted space. Now it is the social hub of our home, and I just love how it has opened up the house to the garden,' smiles Kerrie. **YH**

ROOMPLAN



THE DETAILS

Paint	£200.50
Flooring	£700.80
Folding sliding doors	£1,200
Lighting	£509.97
Shutters	£1,030
TOTAL	£3,641.27

Shopping list

Conservatory frame painted in: **French Grey dark 163**; skirting in **Rolling Fog Mid 158**, both intelligent eggshell, £19 per litre; **walls: French Grey and French Grey dark 163**; **ceiling: Slaked Lime**, all absolute matt emulsion, £30.50 per 2.5l, all The Little Greene Paint Company. **Wellington softwood white folding sliding doors**, from £1,200, Jeld-Wen. **Bespoke Phoenix wood shutters**, from £170 per 500mm x 1000mm panel (including installation), Shutters by Design. **Original seagrass flooring**, £23 per sq m, Crucial Trading. **Nickel shade wall lamps**, £159.99 each; **chandelier**, £199.99; **wide stripe cushions**, £19.99 per pair; **wooden birds on stand**, from £24.99; **stone-effect fossil on stand**, £35; **white birdcage**, £129.99 per pair; **white hurricane lantern**, £189.99; **decorative zinc pears**, £7.99 each, all The Interior Co. **Convex dial wall clock**, £99, Newgate Clocks. **Numerical cushions**, from a selection, HomeSense.

For stockists see page 122

3 of the best... wall lights

£19.99 from Homebase

We love the subtle detail on the Westwick wall light – perfect for adding a warm glow to your room.

£25 from Next

Achieve a Moroccan vibe with the Agra wall light. This beautiful style is also available in a table lamp, chandelier and a pendant.

£40 from Bhs

Go for sheer elegance with the Juliette wall light – the droplets and leaf detail make this an eye-catching addition.



£19.99



£25



£40

Feature Paula Woods Photos Lizzie Orme