

# KITCHENS BEDROOMS & BATHROOMS

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# Free thinking

In just four months, Nick Ross completely reinvented his 1980s house, creating a clutter-free, design-conscious family home

Report and styling: Sharon Davies Photography: Hugh Burden





## BRISTOL HOME

Walking through Nick Ross's modern courtyard, it's easy to forget that you are in the heart of a buzzing city. He runs his own design and build company in Bristol and lives with his wife Catharine and two young children, Lily, 6 and Finley, 5. With years of experience in providing creative design solutions, Nick enjoys the challenge of transforming properties into something truly special. As such, would turning his attention to his own home be more difficult? "If anything it was easier," he explains. "When redesigning a space I have a vision in my head of how I want it to look. Conveying this vision to someone who is not particularly design literate can be difficult. I obviously didn't have to do this with my own house."

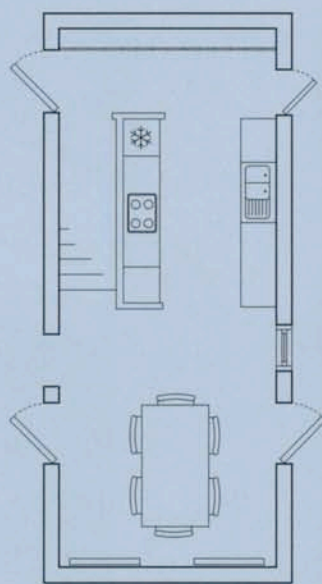
Every room in the uninspiring 1980s property needed rejigging but the biggest problem areas were the kitchen, bathroom and master bedroom. Nick began the project with a thorough examination of how he and Catharine wanted to live in the house. "Rather than ploughing ahead and making mistakes, we put time in early and carefully thought through the whole project," explains Nick. "We talked through how we wanted to use the space on a daily basis. This is particularly important when you have two young children to think about," he explains.

Nick has a passion for space planning and creating homes that flow well. The L-shaped nature of his house presented a particular challenge. "The key to the redesign was to make use of the internal dark corner," explains Nick. "Previously, this

had been the dining room – a dark corridor with no windows."

With a taste for contemporary architecture and minimalism, Nick set about reinventing his house in just four months, transforming it into a unique, modern family home. Pale oak flooring flows throughout without any interruptions. "This creates much more of a sense of space, with rooms flowing from one to another," he observes. "Thresholds break up the space, particularly when there are different materials such as carpet. It makes a house feel so much smaller." Nick further encouraged a sense of space and height by taking the doorways up to the ceiling.

Two small rooms were knocked through into one open kitchen-dining space with an enclosed staircase. Nick used the staircase wall to house clever storage and smart ▶

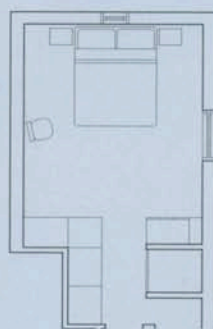




*“Thresholds break up the space and make a house feel so much smaller”*

**Left:** Lily and Finley enjoy drawing in the dining area, the social hub of the home, where natural light streams through the windows and the door leading to the courtyard. The oak flooring flows throughout the house and up the stairs, emphasising the feeling of space **Above:** An AEG-Electrolux combination microwave and oven and a Liebherr larder fridge fit perfectly with the modern, streamlined appearance of the kitchen **Right:** A bank of floor-to-ceiling storage cupboards lines the far end of the kitchen. Previously a dark and underused space, it now works hard, with shelf upon shelf of orderly storage





**Above:** A sense of calm is clearly apparent in this relaxing bedroom, which uses a successful mix of bright wallpaper, oak flooring and pale-coloured, skirting-free walls **Left:** Nick created a corridor of wardrobes at the entrance to the bedroom. The focal point is the circular window, which is positioned high above Nick and Catharine's bed – also designed by Nick **Below:** All the storage Nick and Catharine could possibly need is built into the floor-to-ceiling wardrobes in the bedroom. Designed by Nick, they are made from wood which matches the flooring, creating a seamless look



## BRISTOL HOME

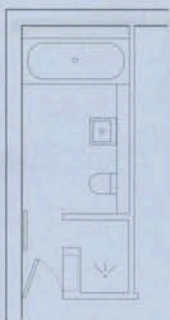
appliances. The other side of the galley kitchen has easy-to-reach open shelves, iroko wood worktops and a sink. "A galley kitchen works best in terms of ergonomics," he says. The far end of the room – the dark corner of the L-shaped house – incorporates a sophisticated system of floor-to-ceiling cupboards and a door that leads out to the utility room, which was formerly the garage. "I always like to persuade clients to have floor-to-ceiling cupboards as they provide a huge amount of storage," explains Nick. "It's surprising how many clients are trapped into the idea that they must have lots of wall units."

The dining area, dominated by a Ronald Schmitt glass table, is suffused with natural light from the new, large, oak-framed windows and glass doors to the colourful courtyard with its dramatic, sail-like canopies.

*"We talked through how we wanted to use the space on a daily basis"*

Upstairs, Nick has created a spacious family bathroom with smart, functional sanitaryware and storage. He added a stone bath deck and built a floor-to-ceiling shower enclosure with an integral cupboard which, combined with the mirror cabinet above the basin, provides plenty of storage for the family's bathing paraphernalia. "Mood lighting in the shelf above the bath means that there's no downlighter shining in your face when you lie down to bathe," says Nick.

Extra space was stolen from the original corridor to create a run of floor-to-ceiling wardrobes in the master bedroom, leaving the rest of the room clutter free. Nick designed and crafted all the wood furniture including the bed and side units, which he ▶



**Above:** Nick's choice of simple form and quality materials creates a look of understated elegance in the bathroom. **Right:** The bathroom entranceway has a feeling of light and space with the Velux window, full-height doorway and uninterrupted oak flooring



# SourceBook

## DESIGN

Moon Design and Build (0117 973 3284 or [www.moondesignandbuild.co.uk](http://www.moondesignandbuild.co.uk))

## KITCHEN

**Units, flooring and lighting** Moon Design and Build, as before

**Worktop** Clarks Wood Company (0117 971 6316 or [www.clarkswood.com](http://www.clarkswood.com))

**Induction hob, combination microwave and oven** AEG-Electrolux (0870 535 0350 or [www.aeg-electrolux.co.uk](http://www.aeg-electrolux.co.uk))

**Larder fridge** Liebherr (0870 898 5050 or [www.liebherr.co.uk](http://www.liebherr.co.uk))

**Sink** Habitat (0844 499 1111 or [www.habitat.co.uk](http://www.habitat.co.uk))

**Tap** Carron Phoenix (01324 638321 or [www.carron.com](http://www.carron.com))

**Glass splashbacks** GGP Glass (01562 754488 or [www.gggglass.co.uk](http://www.gggglass.co.uk))

**Dining table** Ronald Schmitt (020 8960 1275 or [www.ronald-schmitt.com](http://www.ronald-schmitt.com))

**Doors and windows** Rogers Joinery (0117 977 2499)

**Coffee machine** Siemens, John Lewis (0845 604 9049 or [www.johnlewis.com](http://www.johnlewis.com))

**Paint** Stone White, Farrow & Ball (01202 876141 or [www.farrow-ball.com](http://www.farrow-ball.com))

## BEDROOM

**Furniture design, flooring, lighting and storage** Moon Design and Build, as before

**Bedding** Habitat, as before

**Wallpaper** Asuka, Osborne & Little (020 7352 1456 or [www.osborneandlittle.com](http://www.osborneandlittle.com))

**Wardrobe handles** Häfele (01788 542020 or [www.hafele.co.uk](http://www.hafele.co.uk))

**Paint** Pointing, Farrow & Ball, as before

## BATHROOM

**All fittings** supplied by Bathroom Solutions (0117 929 9227 or [www.bathroomssolutionsltd.co.uk](http://www.bathroomssolutionsltd.co.uk)), including:

**WC** Pozzi-Ginori ([www.pozzi-ginori.com](http://www.pozzi-ginori.com))

**bath** Bette ([www.bette.de](http://www.bette.de))

**brassware** Crosswater ([www.crosswater.co.uk](http://www.crosswater.co.uk))

**Shower enclosure, flooring, mirror cabinet and mood lighting** Moon Design and Build, as before

**Tiles** Exclusive Tile Studio (0117 942 8599 or [www.exclusivetilestudio.co.uk](http://www.exclusivetilestudio.co.uk))

**Paint** Pigeon, Farrow & Ball, as before

## COST

A similar kitchen would cost between £15,000 and £20,000 including design, build, fitting and appliances. A similar bathroom would cost around £12,000 and a similar bedroom, between £12,000 and £15,000 including the custom-made furniture



**Above:** Every bit of space has been utilised for storage, including the clever floor-to-ceiling cupboard in the shower enclosure, which is great for hiding clutter

kept low to emphasise the feeling of height. The focal point is the feature wall with Asuka peony-patterned wallpaper by Osborne & Little and a circular window.

Nick and Catharine Ross can be justly proud of their unique city

home. With intelligent and sensitive design, Nick has totally transformed the interior of this property to create a home that is spacious and functional with bespoke design concepts and furniture that are perfect for family living. **KEE**



The open wooden shelf below the mirrored sliding-door cabinet provides a useful surface for toiletries, and matches the bath panel and flooring to pull the entire design together.