



# SUSTAINABLE CONTEMPORARY LIVING

ARCH-angels Architects re-imagine a 1920s end-of-terrace house in Brighton to create practical, modern living

## The Brief

To renovate a draughty 1920s end-of-terrace house in Brighton. The client wanted to radically re-imagine their under-exploited living accommodation to create a more practical modern environment in the most environmentally friendly way possible.

Upon moving into their new home, our clients saw potential in the 1920s semi-detached house. Although the rooms were small, they knew that they would benefit from changes to its layout in order to improve the flow.

Over several years, they have made vast improvements to the design and energy efficiency of the home. They have increased the house's usable space and enabled modern-day living within a traditional-style house, without having to extend outwards.

## Re-designing the Layout

As well as improving the fabric of the building, the main focus was opening up the ground floor and reworking the existing layout. By

working closely with our clients, we were able to generate great ideas about how to make better use of the space.

We created a design which removed the walls between the galley kitchen and dining room, and between the dining room and lounge. However, in order to maintain the feel of separate rooms, we came up with the idea of a 'folding wall' between the lounge and the dining room. The wall, made of a light aluminium frame clad in painted aluminium sheets, gave them the options to keep the space open or close it off.

They also wanted to make sure storage was factored into the remodel of the living space. So we designed a stud partition to be built across one wall, with a recess for a cupboard and an alcove for their TV. This also helps provide acoustic protection from the neighbours.

The dining area adjoining the lounge now has a folding sliding door which opens out onto the garden. This creates a seamless connection to the terrace outside, bringing in light and building upon the open feel of the new layout. The kitchen footprint has remained much the same, but with a new U-shaped layout, built-in appliance and floor-to-ceiling cupboards, the space is now being used more efficiently.

## Adding Rooms

The clients were keen to find space for a second bathroom. Having completed a loft conversion some years before and creating a fourth bedroom, they felt the house would benefit from this extra room.

By knocking down the walls on the ground floor and creating an open-plan space, they no longer needed the door from the hallway to the kitchen, so were able to utilise space under the stairs in front of where this door had been. The new room is small, but they fixed a shower head to the ceiling and lowered the floor to create a wet-room without the risk of water escaping. Glass cladding to the whole room means that it is waterproof and easy to wipe down.

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## Sustainable Design

The renovation project provided the perfect opportunity to add much-needed insulation to the building. We sourced some high-performance double-glazed Crittall (80 percent recycled steel), which were more in keeping with the original look of the property. Along with the cavity wall, Ecobead insulation and under-floor heating and insulation mean that the house is now much warmer.

We also specified photovoltaic (PV) panels for the roof to allow the clients to generate their own electricity. The panels are connected to an inverter stored in a small storage room, and when there isn't enough solar energy, the system automatically switches to grid electricity. The South Coast is the ideal place for solar panels, benefiting as it does from more sun than the national average, as well as plenty of radiant light reflected from the sea. To be as environmentally friendly as possible, the project made use of reclaimed materials, from the glamorous worktops, cleverly fashioned from recycled glass, to the reuse of existing timber-panelled doors, slate roof tiles, salvaged paving slabs and cobble setts, reclaimed from local yards, which would otherwise been sent to landfill.

The clients took their time to save money for the best quality possible, knowing that despite the initial investment, a greener home would soon start to save them money with low running costs. At ARCH-angels Architects we love chatting to people about how they can realise this for their own homes.

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