

Words **Jennifer Harper** Photographs **Jayne Emsley**



'We did give out a few bottles of wine to the neighbours as thanks for putting up with us'

♦♦ had to move out to holiday cottages for a couple of months while we did the extension."

Being in a conservation area, villagers were no doubt curious as to the alterations being made and the style of extension planned. Gavin says they quickly discovered that they had very sympathetic neighbours.

"We had to re-wire the house but had to get the road dug up in order to get new electrical mains cabling into the house. We had just moved in, had skips at the door and had got the road dug up - we did give out a few bottles of wine to the neighbours as thanks for putting up with us."

Nevertheless, it was the extension, which was built by Lothian Design & Build, that proved to push the boundaries in terms of Gavin's own design skills. His partner, William Anderson, came up with the original design, which Gavin tweaked - built at a 45-degree angle, the triangular wing simply slots onto the back of the house, still allowing space in the garden for a patio and play area for the couple's children - Madeleine, five, and Sabine, three.

"In terms of bridging old and new, the extension is such a stark contrast," admits Gavin. "It is very bold but the planners were happy with that - a conservation area is about architectural interest."

The new wing contains the dining kitchen, which boasts underfloor heating and a boiler room on the ground floor, with the third bedroom above. The original part of the house claims a large living room and WC/utility on the ground level, and two bedrooms and family bathroom upstairs.

A long bank of wood and tempered glass units, topped with white Corian and square pillar taps at the sink, create the wow factor in the kitchen. This is accentuated by an elongated window, which separates the floor and wall units. The round table and leather tub chairs which neatly slot underneath nestle comfortably in the space, while a blackboard-covered door - put in for the girls to draw on - conceals the boiler room.

"Instead of tiling, we wanted the long window to provide separation between the old stone and the new white square structure, though it also serves as a light shelf for the kitchen," says Gavin. "When we sit down at the table we have a brilliant view out to the greenery. The table and chairs are from Dwell - they are so comfortable. We looked at about 300 taps before choosing the pillar ones - they are visible through the long window so they had to be right."

Gavin's commitment to doing the job right extended into the master bedroom where the couple cleverly created concealed his and hers dressing rooms behind the bed. Every room in the house is painted white, with colour added through carefully chosen paintings and soft furnishings, or flooring such as the oak hardwood in the lounge.

"I am a typical architect in terms of painting white walls," laughs Gavin.

"I have used coloured lighting in some rooms



**Clockwise from top: the kitchen; the Jefcoates; one of the bedrooms; glass coffee table; painting and silverware; the master bedroom; the chic bathroom**

and we inherited some nice pictures from my wife's dad."

Having spent five years perfecting Lindean, the family are on the move again, but hope to stay within West Linton. Gavin admits they will be taking fond memories of the house with them.

"During our first Christmas here we still didn't have doors or windows, so had Christmas dinner in the kitchen with the windows boarded up," he smiles. "On the day that the scaffolding came down I got home from work after dark to

find a trail in the frost where people had been stopping to have a look at the extension. We call it the Marmite extension as you either love it or hate it, though one 80-year-old man stopped and said he thought it was wonderful."

He adds: "We do love the house - it is just a happy house. It almost has something spiritual about it." ♦♦

Lindean, Croft Road, West Linton, is for sale at offers over £250,000 through Starrock, Armstrong & Thomson (0131 225 4082, www.safsoicflors.co.uk)

# Neighbourhood watch

Gavin and Marie-Dominique Jefcoate caused a certain amount of upheaval, and interest, when they extended and upgraded their West Linton home



IT WAS by a stroke of luck that Gavin and Marie-Dominique Jefcoate bought their home in West Linton five years ago. Gavin, an architect with Penicuik-based Jefcoate Anderson, had been commissioned to design and build an extension for the idyllic, mid-1800s stone-built end-terrace house in the heart of the village. However, before planning permission had been granted, the owners found a new property and offered Lindean for sale.

"They were selling to friends of theirs - I said that was a shame as my wife would love to live in West Linton," recalls Gavin. "Fortunately for us, the other sale fell through and we did a deal with them."

Gavin had completed plans for the previous

owner's extension but amended them slightly to better suit their own needs before lodging them again. However, it took another ten months before planning permission was granted. During the wait, the couple took the house back to the stone walls, re-wired, upgraded the insulation and moved the staircase.

It is clear the Jefcoates put their hearts into their home as it claims many pleasant surprises - from the glass balustrade that leads up the stairs and allows you to see from the kitchen right through to the lounge, to the imported grey Italian porcelain tiles in the bathroom and the surround sound and lighting effects throughout the house. However, the couple initially toyed with the idea of doing nothing to change it.

**Clockwise from main: contemporary furnishings in the living room; further views of the living room, including the wood-burning stove; the triangular wing extension; the dining table and tub chairs are from Dwell**

"The house was very habitable when we bought it. We had just spent four years living on a building site doing our last house so the day that we moved in to this one we both said it would be very easy to sit down and not do anything," smiles Gavin. "However that feeling lasted a few seconds and we quickly got guys in to rip the ceilings down. We moved some partition walls by just four inches in order to make the room sizes on the first floor work better."

He added: The original kitchen was a bricked-off corner of the lounge and was very small. When we stripped it back, we put a temporary kitchen in the lounge and lived there with our two girls and a German shepherd for 12 months until planning permission was granted. We ♦♦