



Words Jennifer Harper Photographs Phil Wilkinson



the old brick fireplace with an Art Deco fireplace and fire basket. Outside is an alcove that is built under the overhang of the extension. "I wanted some kind of seating area incorporated," says Debbie.

The couple also re-turfed the garden and installed a stepped deck around the rear of the house, connecting the living room and sun room. However, they opted for a recycled plastic decking that requires minimal maintenance.

"The decking was expensive because it is recycled but it has been admired so many times," Debbie says. "I had also spotted a grey cladding that was being used on a building project in Colinton - I liked it and wanted the extension clad with it. Jim managed to get it for me, even though it's usually just used on commercial projects."

Ten years on and Debbie and Gordon are happy that they have taken time to get to know their home - and are certainly getting the most out of it.

"I still have a few more projects that I would like to do, like the driveway and front garden," admits Debbie. "But we just love this area and it's so convenient for the city bypass, park and local shops. There really is no reason for us to move. People say to us that the improvements we have made will help the sale of the house but we don't want to sell. We have done all of this work purely for ourselves. This is our home." ❀

Jefcoate Anderson Architects (10968 674245; www.jefcoate-anderson.co.uk); Forum Property Services (E: info@forumgb.com)

she had to make some cutbacks. "My builder Jim McCrimmond, of Forum Property Services, installed the kitchen for me. I would have liked marble or granite but the worktops are so very long that I had to choose a grey granite-effect top," she says. "I would have liked underfloor heating and a tiled floor too but Jim said it would be very expensive, so in the end he suggested a laminate tile that looks like marble. Jim's advice saved me a lot of money, meaning I could put extra into more long-term things like the self-cleaning roof lights and doors."

At the same time as completing the extension, the couple took the opportunity to refurbish the hall and living room, putting down a new wooden floor to run through both. They also installed double doors leading from the living room to the hallway and replaced

on the bedrooms and bathroom upstairs. Phase two started in September last year and took about eight weeks to finish."

Debbie was very clear during the design process that she did not want a conservatory, but preferred to have roof lights in both the kitchen and sun room. She also wanted white gloss units, along with a combination of pull-out larder units and deep drawers for maximum storage.

Having installed gas into the house, she opted for both an electric hob and gas burner, two ovens, an American larder fridge and wine cooler. Keeping a firm eye on her budget, the six-metre-long worktops meant that



keeping an eye on finance, the couple opted to do the work in two phases.

"William designed the extension but essentially helped us keep it within our budget. The first phase, which involved taking out the old kitchen, putting in the staircase and building the extension and new kitchen, took about 12 weeks," recalls Debbie. "When that was completed we decided to enjoy the downstairs for a while before we started work

time looking at similar bungalows in the area to identify where people were putting in a staircase when they converted the attic. We looked at various options but in the end realised that the best place for us to put the staircase was where our old kitchen was. This meant we had to relocate the kitchen."

At this stage, in June 2008, the couple brought in architect William Anderson of Jefcoate Anderson who came up with plans to extend the property out to meet the adjoining garage, creating a new kitchen, utility room and sun room, with doors opening directly out into the garden. A door was also created giving access from the garage to the utility. As the staircase was positioned in the old kitchen, it allowed maximum space upstairs for two additional bedrooms and an en-suite bathroom. However, again

with sleek kitchen opening into a sun room that boasts bespoke roof lights and doors that fill this portion of the house with natural daylight.

"When we bought the house it was stuck in the 1970s," recalls Debbie. "It had old-fashioned storage heating so we had to get gas installed into the house for the new central heating and boiler. At the time we just lived around the corner so it was handy to come in and out while that work was being done."

The Barrs took a long-term approach to the kitchen and replacing it, they chose to live with the dated units until they worked out how best to extend up into the attic space.

"Firstly we wanted to make sure we had enough money for that kind of project," recalls Debbie. "I spent some

**S**OMETIMES it takes time to get to know a property. After sorting any necessary basics, how do you improve it and get the accommodation you need out of the building? Debbie and Gordon Barr decided to take inspiration from neighbouring properties after they bought their 1930s bungalow on the south side of Edinburgh.

The couple, both IT analysts, bought the two-bedroom house in June 2000 and quickly discovered that it needed completely re-wired and a full central heating system. They spent two months getting these essentials fixed before moving in with their son Callan, now 17, and getting to know their home.

However, ten years on and the family has fully made it their own, and now enjoy a spacious four-bedroom home

The Barrs decided to pace themselves when it came to refurbishing their home. Now they intend to spend even more time enjoying the fruits of their labours

Clockwise from above: view to the decking from the living room; rooflights flood the kitchen with light; the attic bedroom; the new staircase; the exterior of the extension

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