

The mesmerising view is framed by floor-to-ceiling windows with specialist UV-reducing glazing imported from a Belgian company. Keen to repurpose furniture from her previous home, Olivia decided to keep the dining table's legs and commission a new top for it. The chairs are from William Yeoward.



ALL IS *QUIET*

Enchanted by the panoramic views and peaceful, rural location, Olivia Shaw has creatively transformed a 19th-century find into an elegant, timeless family home

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PHOTOGRAPHY RACHAEL SMITH



Little Greene's Portland Stone Mid on the walls provides the perfect backdrop to the nautical painting by Tina Stokes. A small button-back sofa and a side table create a cosy seating area in this sunny corner. ▶



‘When we step outside, we walk straight into the heart of the countryside’

ABOVE Tremendous attention to detail went into the project, including creating recessed shelves either side of the electric Aga.

LEFT Olivia sits beneath a vintage oil painting by Nils Forsberg fils from Etalage. To see more of her interior design work, visit oliviashawinteriors.com

From the moment Olivia and Chris Shaw spotted their new home, a brick-and-flint property in the heart of rural Wiltshire, they were absolutely enthralled by its setting and the spectacular view that reminded them of their roots. “As I am originally from Norfolk and my husband is from Devon, the combination of the expansive, breathtaking outlook over fields towards ‘big skies’ at one side, and a beautiful wooded valley on the other, instantly resonated with both of us,” says Olivia. “Having viewed around 20 houses without success, we felt this was the one, and that with vision, time and patience, we could totally transform it into a wonderful home for our family.”

Back in 2017, Olivia, of Olivia Shaw Interiors, and Chris, who is a chartered surveyor in commercial property, were settled in London with their sons, ►



ABOVE The kitchen is decorated in muted tones to not detract from the view outside. A punch of colour is added in the form of the maroon bar stools from Normann Copenhagen. The tumbled-edge limestone flooring was sourced from Stone Age in Parsons Green.

LEFT To complement the windows, Olivia chose Little Greene’s Normandy Grey for the front door.



ABOVE The Roman blind and curtains (opposite) in the drawing room are in Florence Rose Eau by Fleurons d'Hélène and came from the couple's London home. The landscape painting by Scottish artist Sarah Carrington is often a talking point in this space. The ottoman is upholstered in a Fermoie fabric.

RIGHT Olivia's study, located just off the orangery, doubles up as a cosy snug for the family. The cushions are made up in fabrics from Fermoie, Abbeville Designs and Bennison Fabrics and the rug is from Safavieh.



'The all-encompassing view informed the palette, particularly downstairs where natural, muted tones create fresh spaces with a relaxed feel'

Wilbur, now eight, and Rufus, now five. However, on September 15 of that year, their lives changed dramatically. "Minutes after I had dropped Wilbur to his nursery, it was cordoned off and police were everywhere," Olivia recalls. "I discovered to my horror that a bomb had exploded on a train at Parsons Green, injuring dozens of people. Wilbur was stuck inside the nursery and I was unable to reach him. It was all incredibly shocking and distressing. That night, Chris and I made the decision to relocate to give our children the safe, rural upbringing we had both enjoyed."

Following in the footsteps of her business colleague, Betty Bettinson, Olivia enlisted property search agents Heaton & Partners to help find their new house. "Even though our area included four counties within commutable distance of the City for Chris's work, there were slim pickings, particularly since one of my priorities was a period house with no road noise."

In the spring of 2018, the couple's agent, Edward Heaton, told them he had found a property in Wiltshire that, although smaller than anticipated, had vast potential. "Despite viewing it on a terrible day with driving rain and howling winds, I had a really good feeling about this house and how we could put our stamp on it," Olivia explains. "Thankfully, Chris shared my enthusiasm."

Within four whirlwind days of making an offer the pair had exchanged contracts. By this stage, they had sold their London home and moved in with Olivia's parents. Upon completing on the house seven months later, they wisely decided to wait before making any radical changes. They wanted to familiarise themselves with the property and consider how best to blend the existing building with its later additions, including a conservatory built in 1999. "We're not exactly sure when our house dates from, but it appears on a map in ►

ABOVE A bold flamingo print from King & McGaw lends a contemporary twist to the drawing room, which is located in the original part of the house. Olivia has given this space a more traditional, feel, using a richer, slightly darker palette. The walls are painted in Little Greene's Portland Stone Deep.



ABOVE Olivia felt the photograph by Tim Hall, that had been in the couple's sitting room in London, would work perfectly in their en-suite bathroom. The floor tiles are from Domus Tiles and the walls and bath panel are painted in in Farrow & Ball's Light Blue.

1860 as 'The Old Shop'," says Olivia. It is believed that the property would once have been a handy stop for provisions for people walking The Ridgeway and Olivia was enchanted to discover a little bread oven in what has now become the drawing room.

While deliberating about how to reconfigure the spaces and extend sympathetically, Olivia was introduced to Simon Johnson, an architect whose creativity, design aesthetic and vision was aligned with her own. "Simon's eye for detail was phenomenal," she says. "He totally understood my desire to create a house that flowed seamlessly from old to new without being jarring or feeling disjointed."

Plans were formulated to remove the 1990s conservatory and build an airy orangery with a large roof lantern and floor-to-ceiling steel-framed windows and doors to maximise the view, reconfigure the layout of several rooms, fit a new kitchen and bathrooms, and update the electrics and plumbing before redecorating

throughout. With planning permission granted, and a team of local builders and craftsmen due to start in March 2020, the Covid pandemic outbreak meant the project went on hold until that autumn.

In regard to the interiors, Olivia's impeccable eye for design and experience stood her in extremely good stead. "The all-encompassing view informed the palette, particularly downstairs, where I chose natural, muted tones to create fresh spaces with a relaxed feel," she says. "Anything too bright or bold would definitely have competed with the focal-point landscape."

Olivia has selected the colours and accents to create plenty of interest without anything being too overpowering and chosen finishes that reference the original architecture and period features. She was keen, too, to use fabrics, furniture and soft furnishings that would not only work with existing pieces and much-loved artwork, but also stand the test of time. "I wanted our new home to be full of the treasures that we've ►

RIGHT A treasured nursing chair that once belonged to Olivia's mother is another personal addition in this sun-drenched corner of the principal bedroom. It has been upholstered in a Fermoie fabric. Rosanna Lonsdale sells similar cushions.

BELOW The couple's spacious bedroom, where Penny Morrison's Flower Berry wallpaper steals the show. The bedhead and valance have been upholstered in Zanzibar fabric in Ocean by Peter Dunham Textiles. The Pink Ditsy Ruffle quilt is by Sarah K.





collected over the years since that's what I feel gives a home soul and integrity," she says. "Sustainability and longevity are very important to me and I'm a firm believer in buying pieces that I won't tire of, rather than following trends. A lot of the fabrics from our London home have been tweaked and appear in different guises here, which gives that feeling of history and depth."

Since moving in during April 2021, Olivia, Chris and their boys have been embracing their new rural lifestyle and fit-for-purpose home. "Streamlining the house and adding the orangery has given it a completely new lease of life," Olivia says. "The reconfiguration works incredibly well for our family, and the boys are delighted that they now have a separate playroom, as well as a large garden and acres of land to explore."

"We love the view and the added bonus of the huge roof lantern is not just the quality of light during the day, but also the starry skies at night. These days, when we step outside, we walk straight into the heart of the countryside and the best bit is that there's absolutely no road noise. It's an idyllic, tranquil corner of the world that we adore." ■

ABOVE Deciding to work with the curtains and a wardrobe left by the previous owners, Olivia refreshed this space in Ball Green by Farrow & Ball.

RIGHT Having admired this Gallier Diamond wallpaper by Brunswick & Fils for many years, Olivia felt it would be a striking addition in the cloakroom.

