

SEE OUR  
**HOMES**  
TRANSFORMED  
CLASSIC • CONTEMPORARY

To mark the launch of our 2016  
competition, meet the last of  
our 2015 winners



HOME PROFILE

WHO LIVES HERE

Eleri Wilkins, a  
government lawyer, and  
her husband Julian, a  
solicitor and mediator

THE PROPERTY

An end-of-terrace  
Victorian mews house in  
Kilburn, London, which  
the couple bought in  
2012 for £575,000. They  
spent £215,000 on a total  
redesign and renovation.  
The property is now  
worth around £830,000

KITCHEN/DINING AREA

Entertaining is easy in this  
open-plan area where the  
couple can be part of the  
conversation while cooking.  
They painted the run of  
handleless cabinets the same  
tone as the wall to give a  
streamlined effect; a wall of  
floor-to-ceiling cupboards  
housing tableware and a  
fridge-freezer continues the  
sleek look. The kitchen table  
and chairs came from Ikea



EXTERIOR  
Eleri and Julian  
outside their  
award-winning  
property

# WINNING DESIGN

This Victorian mews house has been  
brought right up to date in a painstaking  
renovation that won the Home Transformed  
category of our 2015 competition

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**STREAMLINED LOOK**  
Sliding doors between the hallway and living area are a neat space-saving solution



**LOFT AREA**  
At the top of the staircase the loft area incorporates a huge amount of storage units, from large cupboards to niches that are perfect display spaces



**STAIRCASE**  
The triple-height staircase is clad in birch ply and top lit by the roof lights



**HALLWAY**  
Corten ceramic tiles from Craven Dunnill are a hardwearing choice for this high-traffic area

**R**enovating this London mews house was such a drastic affair that the only part of the building to escape untouched was the gas meter. 'The floors were sloping and there was a rickety spiral staircase leading up to a bedroom without a window,' recalls Eleri Wilkins, who embarked on the project with her husband Julian in 2012. 'It was dark and damp, we had washing-up bowls catching the drips from leaking rooflights and there were mushrooms growing out of the walls. It was all pretty disgusting.'

However, what the building lacked in charm it made up for in potential. 'When Eleri showed me the estate agent details I could see it was a good buy because of the location and the floor space,' says Julian. Perhaps the biggest stumbling block, though, was the spiral staircase that stood in the middle of the living area, limiting the layout of the ground floor. 'We thought it would make sense to move it to the rear right-hand corner of the building, which would open up the whole house,' says Eleri, 'enabling us to add a series of dormers and roof-lights in the loft to flood this newly created space with light.'

The first architect Eleri and Julian consulted said that this change was impossible but, undeterred, they booked a consultation with another architect, this time at the Grand Designs Live exhibition at London's Excel. 'By luck we were given an appointment with George Bradley,' says Eleri. 'He said it would be perfectly possible to relocate the staircase and we were immediately excited.' George had recently established an architectural practice with innovative Belgian architect Ewald Van Der Straeten and they were, at the time, doing up a similar mews property. 'This provided many of the design cues for our home,' adds Julian.

Buoyed up by confidence in their new design team, the couple completed the property purchase in 2012. It then took a year to get

planning permission and go through the tendering process, followed by another year to complete the building work. 'Everything went smoothly and there were no nasty moments along the way,' says Eleri.

The new design includes a generous hallway and an open-plan living space on the ground floor. A bespoke staircase then rises to the next two levels, with two bedrooms on the first floor and a studio room in the attic. The staircase doubles as storage space because the voids beneath the treads are cupboards, housing everything from the fridge-freezer and boiler to the washing machine and water tank.

Central to the style of the house is the quality and finish of the carpentry, as birch-faced ply features throughout – in the kitchen, bathrooms and bedrooms, and on the staircase. 'We wanted lots of wood, but decided that oak would be too expensive as well as not appropriate from an aesthetic point of view,' says Julian.

'We discovered there are various types of ply and each one has different qualities. We specified that we wanted one that was plain, pale and had no dark knots because we were after a streamlined look.'

The couple moved in during June 2014, bringing with them the furniture from their previous home. With its mid-century feel it slots in well with the simple colour scheme. 'Life here is very good,' says Eleri. 'There's a lovely buzz to the area and the house is extremely easy to live in. Though it's small, it never feels confined. When you look at it from the road, you'd never guess how light and spacious it is inside.'

● **Eleri and Julian won £2,500 of DFS prizes. The judging panel was made up of House Beautiful Editor Julia Goodwin, FMB Chief Executive Brian Berry, designer Lisa Stickley, and Kellie Wyles from DFS. Turn the page to enter this year's competition.**

## STORAGE solutions

✦ Rather than filling your home with a diverse collection of freestanding wardrobes, chests of drawers and cupboards – which can look messy – incorporate plenty of built-in storage to create a more streamlined finish ✦ For an uninterrupted clutter-free look, choose minimal door furniture or opt for handleless units so that your built-in cupboards will resemble a blank wall ✦ Create storage space by building under-stair cupboards, making full use of all the voids by fitting doors that lead directly into the entire space ✦ Box in areas with restricted headroom under the eaves in loft rooms to create cupboard space ✦ Build recessed box shelving into stud walls to make little nooks that are perfect for displaying treasured possessions ✦ Remember to include a tall, shallow cupboard where you can easily stow the ironing board, mop and vacuum cleaner

### WHAT IT COST

Kitchen, including white goods.....	£21,000
Bathrooms.....	£15,000
Flooring (not carpets).....	£2,500
Roof and structure.....	£40,000
Staircase and woodwork.....	£30,000
<b>TOTAL.....</b>	<b>£108,500</b>



FOR STORE DETAILS SEE **WHERE TO BUY** PAGE