



REAR GABLES

The twin peaks of the rear gable were designed to echo the Sommervilles' previous Arts and Crafts home next door. Triple-glazed oak windows and doors were sourced from Arden Windows.





New build CASE STUDY

FUTURE CLASSIC

David and Di Sommerville have built a beautifully detailed Arts and Crafts-style home using structural insulated panels.

STORY: **DEBBIE JEFFERY** PICTURES: **JOE LOW**

IN BRIEF

PROJECT

New build in Hampshire

FINANCE

COST Already owned – value approx £400,000

SPENT £630,000

WORTH Approx £1.1m+

OWNERS' TOP TIPS

"We left all of the building

project management to Harpoint Builders. Seeing the various issues that occurred during the build, such as the timing of supplies and bad weather, meant we were delighted we had not been tempted to tackle the project management ourselves."

David and Di Sommerville had lived in their five-bedroom Arts and Crafts house for some years, and had frequently considered developing part of the one-acre garden. "We wanted to down-size, and thought that our garden would make an ideal building plot, but kept getting cold feet as we'd never built a house before," explains David, who first purchased the property 30 years ago. After visiting various exhibitions, and the National Self Build & Renovation Centre in Swindon, the Sommervilles eventually decided to take the plunge and embark on their first-ever self-build project.

The benefits that a new home could bring in terms of thermal efficiency and ease of maintenance appealed to them, and they liked the idea of being able to remain living in the same peaceful neighbourhood, less than a mile from the centre of Winchester.

"Developers had shown an interest in building several houses in the garden, but we preferred to have control over what was built, and to design a home for our retirement," says Di. "We loved our old Arts and Crafts house, and wanted a similar style, with high gables, generously proportioned rooms and tall ceilings. Modern developer-built homes can sometimes feel quite cramped."

EXTERIOR

The new house was built from SIPs and clad in a combination of render and tile hanging.





DINING ROOM

The dining room features 180mm wide, 16mm thick Cathedral Grade pre-oiled oak plank flooring, which was also laid in the entrance lobby and library passage.



After researching various practices online, the Sommervilles approached Witcher Crawford Architects to discuss the possibility of obtaining planning permission to build on the site of a former tennis court beside their old house, whilst retaining privacy for both homes.

The Winchester practice undertakes a wide range of bespoke projects, from refurbishments to modern sustainable new builds, and Richard Witcher listened closely to the couple's brief for a traditional home in the Arts and Crafts style, built using the highest-quality materials, but with a modern twist.

"We wanted three bedrooms and three bathrooms upstairs, with a separate sitting room, a study, sufficient space in the hall for a formal dining table, and a multi-purpose kitchen to provide informal dining and living space downstairs," says David, who sketched out a rough ground-floor plan prior to discussions with Richard Witcher.

"My version was more of an L-shape, with the kitchen projecting further into the garden at the rear, but Richard's design placed the kitchen across the back of the house with a double gable to the roof, which is a feature we appreciated as it echoes the gables of our old house."

Externally, the new house incorporates the kind of architectural detailing for which Arts and Crafts homes are renowned, with decorative tile hanging, and a tall, slender, contoured chimney stack. Inside, however, David and Di wanted an altogether simpler and more contemporary finish for ease of maintenance.





KITCHEN

The spacious single-storey kitchen has glazed oak doors opening onto the terrace, and a twin, double-height vaulted ceiling with roof lights. The Howdens kitchen was teamed with granite worktops sourced from a local supplier. Limestone flooring has been laid over underfloor heating in this part of the house.

“We wanted sufficient space in the hall for a formal dining table, and a multi-purpose kitchen to provide informal dining and living space downstairs.”

“It was impressive how quickly Richard understood our brief and gave us exactly what we were looking for,” says David. “He visited our old house and also showed us some of the practice’s completed projects to get a feel for the materials he was suggesting. To see a whole roof and not just a sample of three tiles makes choosing the roof covering far easier.”

Di loved the leaded windows in the couple’s old Arts and Crafts house, and they both wanted to incorporate a feature staircase which would echo the half-landing layout of the stairs in their previous home.

“Richard was so sympathetic to our needs,” says Di. “He managed to recreate the feel of the old house which we had so enjoyed, and future-proofed the new house so that, for example, we could easily install a lift should we ever need to do so.”



STAIRS

The feature staircase has two large, sculpted newel posts and metal banister rails featuring abstract sculpting incorporating leaf forms.

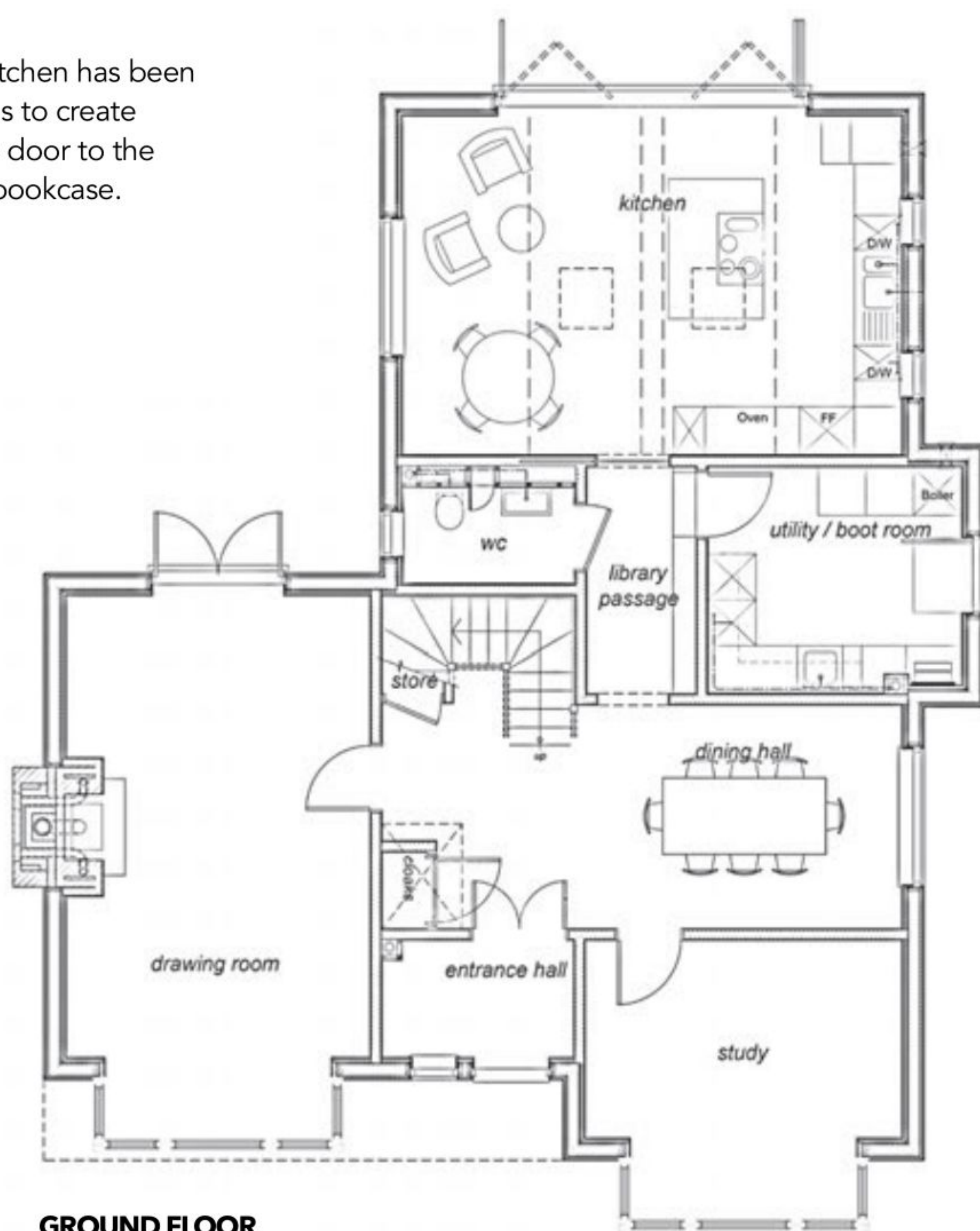
“Having a fake bookcase door in the library passage was a bit of an extravagance, but we love it.”

LIBRARY

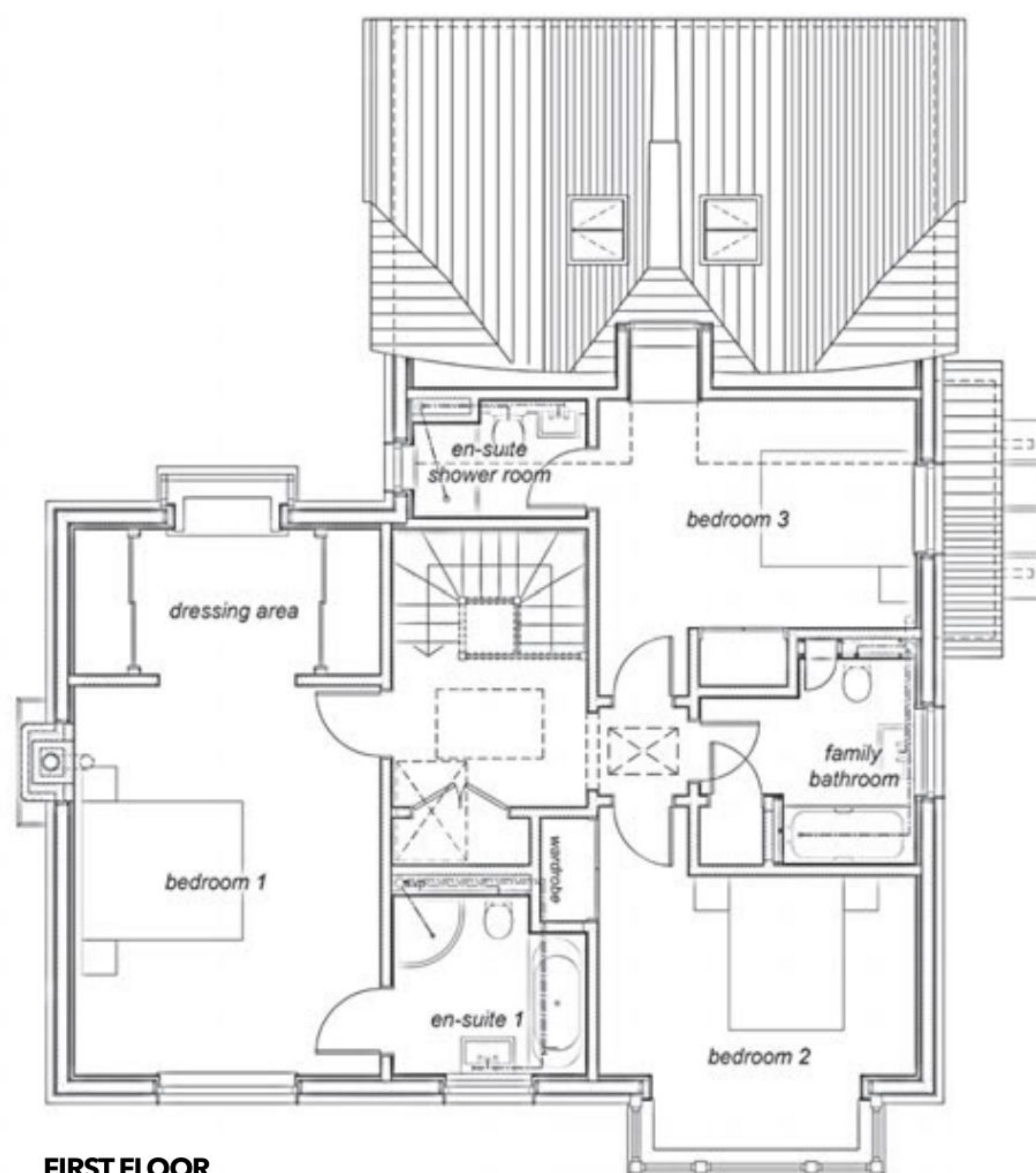
The passage to the kitchen has been lined with bookshelves to create a library area, and the door to the utility room is a false bookcase.

FLOORPLAN

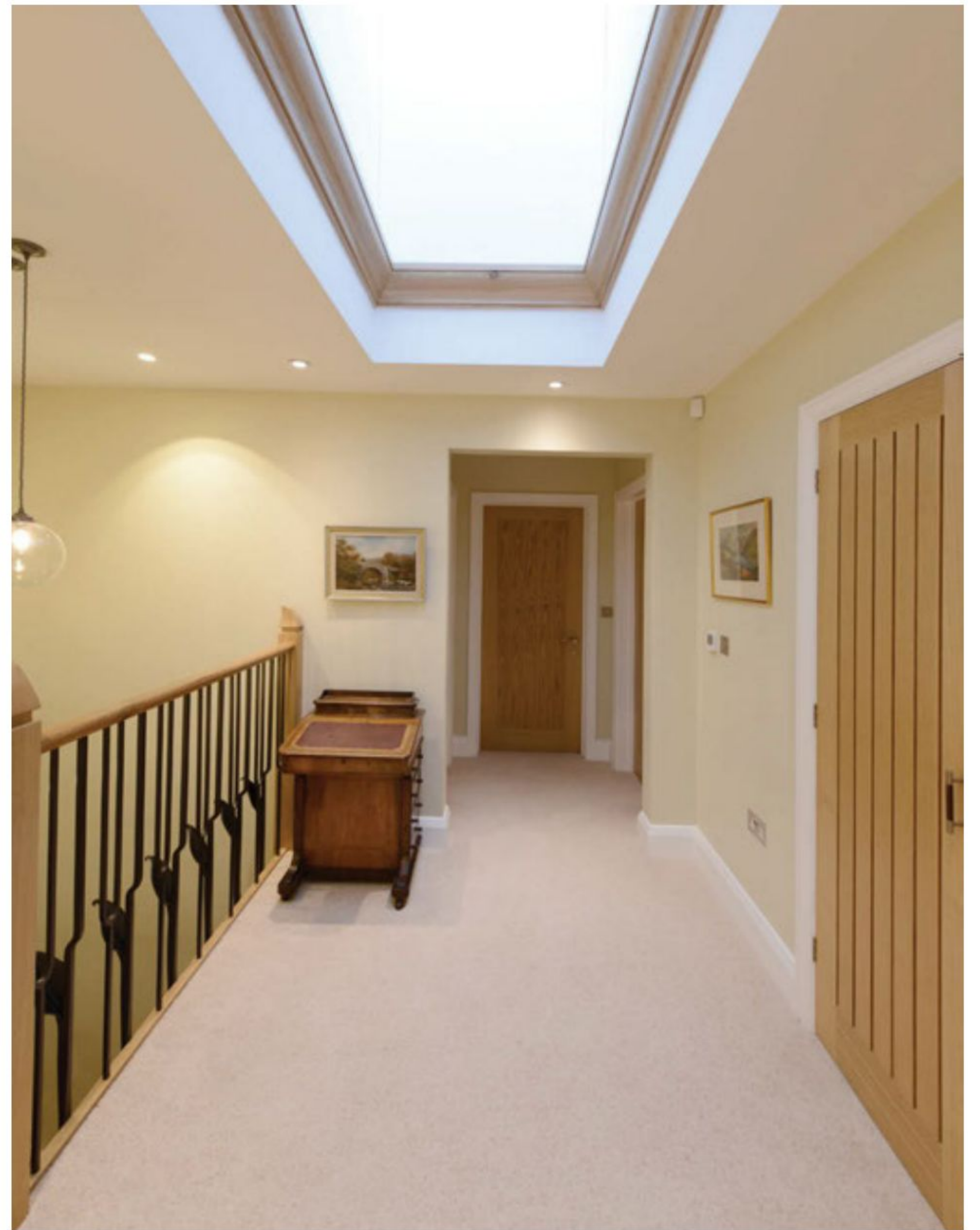
The ground floor contains a dining area in the hall, a sitting room and study, with the library passage leading past a WC and utility to the single-storey kitchen/dining/living space at the rear. Upstairs there are three bedrooms, two en suites and a family bathroom.



GROUND FLOOR



FIRST FLOOR



Before submitting their planning application the Sommervilles had a meeting with the council, and spoke at length to neighbours about what they proposed.

“They were all very positive about what we were doing,” says Di. The plans were then tweaked as a result of these discussions, including adding a small amount of opaque glass in the master bedroom to reinforce a neighbour’s privacy, and this open approach had a positive effect on the planning process, with approval duly granted. This included permission to build a detached double garage, with a steeply pitched tiled roof designed to complement the main house.

The couple were able to continue living in their previous home during the build, which was completed by a local building company following a tender process to four contractors.

“Richard Witcher produced a detailed quotation document which identified the various elements of the project, and the quote we received back from Harpoint Builders was

CONTACTS

PROJECT

Architect Witcher Crawford
Architects: witchercrawford.co.uk

Main contractor Harpoint
Builders: harpointbuilders.co.uk

Structural engineer
KFR Consulting: kfr.co.uk

Electrical subcontractor R Norris
Electrical Ltd: rnorriselectrical.co.uk

Mechanical subcontractor
SJ King Ltd: 01962 882782

STRUCTURE

SIPs Kingspan Tek: kingspantek.co.uk

SIPs supply and erection Bentley
SIP Systems: bentley-sips.com

Tiles and bricks Michelmersh Brick
Holdings PLC: mbhplc.co.uk

Western red cedar soffits Vincent
Timber: vincenttimber.co.uk

Render system K Rend: k-rend.co.uk

External doors and windows
Arden Windows: ardenwindows.net

FIXTURES AND FITTINGS

Kitchen and utility Howdens:
howdens.com

Sanitaryware Overton Bathroom
Centre Ltd: overtonbathrooms.co.uk

Tiles Johnsons Tiles: johnson-tiles.com

Staircase manufacture Salisbury
Joinery: salisburyjoinery.com

Oak flooring Winchester Hardwood
Flooring Company: whfloors.co.uk

Limestone Mandarin Stone:
mandarinstone.com

Salina honed limestone:
Stonell Direct: stonell.com

GasSaver boiler Alpha:
alpha-innovation.co.uk



SITTING ROOM

A glazed oak door leads into the sitting room, where an oak beam sourced from a local reclamation yard was used above the fireplace, which is lined with creasing tiles and houses a wood-burning stove.



extremely thorough,” says David. “They took on the day-to-day management of the build and Richard also oversaw the project. The relationship between architect and builder was excellent, and everyone had a really positive attitude.”

Work got underway in July 2015, and a great deal of soil needed to be removed from one end of the former tennis court to level the plot to the same height as the driveway. Once the foundations, slab and brick plinth were completed the structural insulated panels (SIPs) could then be built.

These were provided and erected by Bentley SIP Systems – delivery partner of the Kingspan TEK Building

System, which offers a specialist design, engineering and construction service. With a fixed start date, the panels are delivered to site pre-cut and engineered ready for installation – reducing waste and site storage space.

“The SIPs went up very quickly, and within only a few days we could appreciate the outline of the new house. It was certainly exciting to see the plans becoming a reality,” says David. “We were keen to source as many materials as possible from local suppliers, and the SIPs panels came from Eastleigh, just nine miles away, while our handmade bricks and tiles were manufactured in Michelmersh, 16 miles away.”



Bentley SIP Systems are delivery partners of the Kingspan TEK Building System, offering a specialist design, engineering and construction service across the South using SIPs - Structural Insulated Panels.

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- Our fully trained erectors install the Kingspan TEK System - supervised and managed by our team of project managers
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Please contact the team on 02380 360455 to discuss your project, or simply email your plans to: info@bentley-sips.com



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Harpoint Builders completed the internal walls and the gabled timber roof structure, which is covered in handmade clay tiles. A rectangular electrically operated roof lantern has been inset into a flat leaded section in order to reduce the overall height of the building and drop light onto the upstairs landing.

Beautifully crafted triple-glazed oak windows from Arden Windows were purchased and stored on site for several weeks prior to installation, and the SIPs panels have been clad externally in a combination of 8mm thin coat render and vertical clay tile hanging which form a scalloped 'fish-tail' design.

"At the top of the hanging tiles is a strip of lead, which reflects the pattern of the tiles below and looks lovely," says David. Every detail of the house has been carefully considered, from the western red cedar soffits to the oak oriel window in the master bedroom dressing area.

One feature which David particularly enjoys is the unusual library passageway which leads to the kitchen, with a faux bookcase door opening into the utility room. The couple chose precisely the type of book spines they wanted for the door, which were then purchased online by the metre.

"We decided that, as we predominantly read paperbacks, we would avoid leather bound volumes as they would stand out against our own collection of books," he says. "The concept of connecting the front and back of the house with that corridor works really well."

Following a 10-month build the house was completed on schedule at the end of May 2016, with the project also coming in on budget. "We brought some pieces of old furniture from our previous home, which stand beside new items," says Di.

"It seems to work, and now we have the best of both worlds – an energy-efficient new home, which is warm to live in and inexpensive to run, but with the Arts and Crafts style, quality and character that we love."

UPSTAIRS

Grey paint has been used to create a feature wall in the master bedroom, which is heated by traditional column radiators.



Final word

WHAT WAS THE HIGH POINT OF YOUR PROJECT?

Seeing the SIPs going up so quickly was terrific.

...AND THE LOW POINT?

Heavy rain just after the SIPs had been erected, and before the roof was completed, meant that the structure got very wet. This was depressing, and certainly held up the whole building process.

YOUR BEST BUY?

Our staircase was designed by architect Richard Witcher, made by a local blacksmith and joinery company, and is a real feature.



...AND THE BIGGEST EXTRAVAGANCE?

Having a fake bookcase door in the library passage was a bit of an extravagance, but we love it.

