

# WHAT LIES BENEATH

Paul Goodchild and Susan Llewellyn demonstrate how intelligent design can transform an awkward lower ground floor into a desirable master bedroom suite

Report: **Elsbeth Pridham**

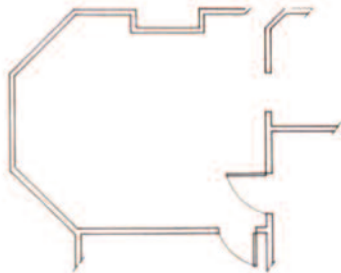
## THE CLIENTS

Dave Attwood plays professional rugby for Bath and England. He recently bought a lower-ground/ground-floor maisonette in a semi-detached Victorian house in Bath with his partner Bridget Whelan, an international project consultant with Clarks Shoes. The couple are renovating the property, uncovering original features wherever possible, and have installed a new kitchen on the ground floor next to the living room, with the bathroom and bedroom downstairs.

## THE BRIEF

Dave and Bridget have a clear vision for their new home but are struggling to make sense of the lower ground floor. They have asked the designers to suggest ideas for a stunning master bedroom and the adjoining quirky-shaped space to be transformed into a dressing room. The couple describe their taste as 'fairly contemporary', although it is useful to note that the recently completed ensuite bathroom has a Victorian feel with roll-top bath and WC with high-level cistern. The bathroom is painted off-white.

## THE SPACE

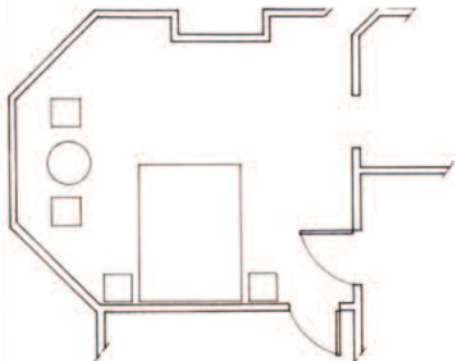


The area where the bedroom is used to contain the old coal cellar: it has been damp proofed and Dave has cleaned and re-painted the original coal shoot. As they were previously renting furnished accommodation, Bridget and Dave have no furniture apart from a large black leather sleigh bed from Feather & Black that they wish to keep. The ground level rises to the back of the house so natural light comes only from the bay window. As this looks onto the drive, privacy will be a consideration. There is a small window in the dressing room but this provides very little light. The bedroom measures 375 x 420cm; the ceiling is 220cm-high.

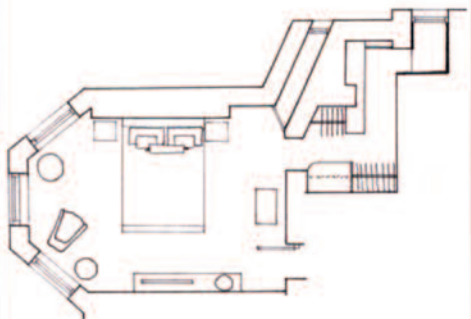
## THE BUDGET

£20,000

## SOLUTION ONE



## SOLUTION TWO



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SOLUTION ONE



THE DESIGNER



Susan Llewellyn is an experienced interior designer based in London. She runs [The Susan Llewellyn Academy of Interior Design](http://www.thesusanllewellynacademy.co.uk) where she holds courses and organises inspirational tours abroad.

“My immediate thoughts turned to light and warmth,” Susan says. She liked the idea of keeping the coal shoot but only if it were lit from inside to create a feature in the corner of the room. “Otherwise it would look bleak.” She added ornate coving and replaced the solid bathroom door with glass. “This improves the flow of light between the rooms and stops the bedroom feeling too enclosed. I’ve suggested thick, clear glass rather than frosted – bright and decadent like a diamond.”

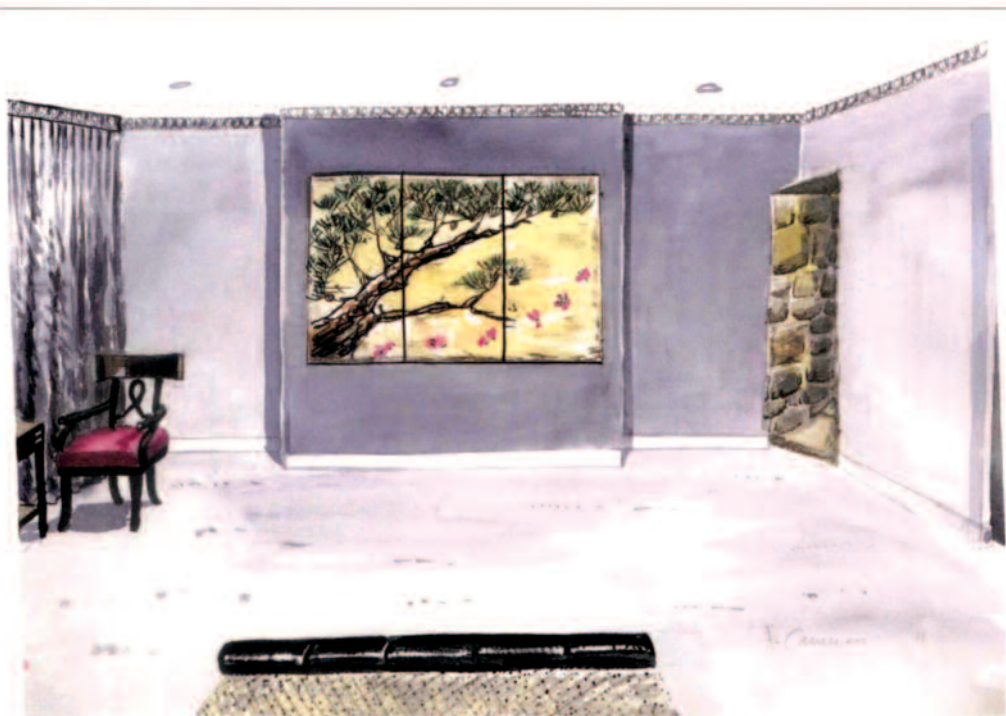
“Bearing in mind who the clients are, however, I didn’t want the room to be overly feminine,” she says. “The look is glamorous yet simple and won’t date easily.” To avoid the large black bed dominating the space Susan would dress it with a silver bedcover using Artisan Pebble fabric from Brian Yates, plus green, gold and rose cushions in silk velvet.

Silver is also picked out in the Brian Yates Bijoux wallpaper behind the bed and again in the sheen of the soft grey Mimosa floor-length curtains at the window. “The luxurious curtains would fill the wall and are virtually the same shade as the paint. We can easily add a sheer

if the clients require greater privacy,” she says. Chairs, upholstered in rose velvet, and an occasional table in the window add a touch of hotel chic. The only other pieces of furniture in the room are twin bedside tables with large crystal lamps. Susan would also commission original artwork for the chimney breast. The Oriental-style painting pulls together the colours used in the room.

“The challenge in the dressing room was to give as much storage as possible while leaving enough space to move around,” says Susan. She suggests bespoke units from Neville Johnson, and all storage would be free of doors for ease of use, including: four open cabinets with adjustable shelves; deep drawers; roll-out tie rack and trinket drawer; three wardrobes providing long and short hanging; plus a low-level cabinet by the window with upholstered seat and roll-out shoe tray. Susan has also found space for a tall mirror framed in the same natural wood as the furniture. The soft grey carpet and paint used in the bedroom would continue into the dressing room.

Susan Llewellyn 07803 070204 or [www.thesusanllewellynacademy.co.uk](http://www.thesusanllewellynacademy.co.uk)



#### THE SPECIFICATIONS

|                                       |       |
|---------------------------------------|-------|
| Carpet, cushions, curtains, bedspread | £6076 |
| Bedside cabinets, table, chairs       | £2253 |
| Bespoke dressing room                 | £9532 |
| Table lamps, artwork                  | £2453 |
| Coving, glass door                    | £2402 |
| Wallpaper                             | £774  |

**TOTAL** £23,490

#### CONTACTS

BRIAN YATES 01524 35035 or  
[www.brian-yates.co.uk](http://www.brian-yates.co.uk)  
 NEVILLE JOHNSON 0161 873 8333 or  
[www.nevillejohnson.co.uk](http://www.nevillejohnson.co.uk)



#### THE VERDICT

"Although we both loved the idea of a walk-in dressing room, trying to make it work was giving us a monster headache. Susan's design makes excellent use of this awkward space with ample storage for both mine and Bridget's clothes, plus useful touches like the tie rack and shoe drawers," says Dave.

"I would never have thought of grey for a bedroom but Susan's scheme is lovely," says Bridget. "Our bed fits in perfectly and, with the glamorous wallpaper and glass bathroom door, it has the feel of a very sophisticated hotel suite."