

LIVE THE LIFE...LOVE THE STYLE

# COUNTRY HOMES & INTERIORS

## HEARTH & HARVEST

- ❖ MELLOW, NATURAL STYLE  
INSPIRED BY AUTUMN
- ❖ THE COMMUNITY ORCHARD  
THAT SAVED A VILLAGE
- ❖ DELICIOUS SWEET &  
SAVOURY APPLE DISHES

**RURAL HOTSPOT**  
THE COUNTRY TOWN  
WITH BRITAIN'S  
BEST HIGH STREET

**10  
BEST  
SOFAS**  
*Stylish &  
snuggly!*

US\$9.99/AUS\$10.50/£4.50  
10  
OCTOBER 2019  
ISSN 1770-9511/5012731

*Get cosy!*

**INSIDE REAL HOMES FULL OF COLOUR & CHARACTER**



# MAKING HISTORY

*In their modern eco build, Sophie and Tim Hulbert have layered handcrafted design with personal pieces to create a home that celebrates their family*



**Kitchen** It was important to Sophie and Tim that they used local companies to carry out the work. **Extension**, Brolly Refurbishment. **Kitchen**, Farnham Furnishers



## **Kitchen-diner**

Sophie wanted step-in, floor-to-ceiling cupboards in here to give the feel of a French farmhouse. Similar **dining chairs**, Cult Furniture. Similar **rug**, Ikea



“WE’VE GIVEN THE HOUSE A MORE FAMILY-FRIENDLY AND SOCIABLE LAYOUT, WITH THE HELP OF THE NEW EXTENSION”



**Snug** The idea was to create the feel of an old country house, where there’s always something interesting just around the corner. **Wood burning stove**, Skantherm

Creating a home with layers of history is not just the preserve of period property dwellers, according to Sophie and Tim Hulbert, owners of this nine-year-old eco house in the Surrey countryside, and parents to three daughters, Poppy, Phoebe and Saffron. ‘Everything we own, every surface we’ve installed, tells our story,’ says Sophie, who is passionate about creating beautifully understated interiors filled with considered details.

Indeed, within the smooth - and highly insulated - white walls are many objects from previous generations. A swivel chair in the snug, for instance, belonged to Sophie’s parents when the family lived in the Middle East - recently reupholstered in a gorgeous dark blue corduroy by a friend, it adds another layer of history. The elephant statue on the living room windowsill, meanwhile, was a souvenir from a family trip abroad. A lot of the pottery dotted around the house was made by Sophie and the girls over the years. ‘We use all of it,’ says Sophie. ‘In fact, nothing in this house is just for decoration; and these beautiful, thoughtful objects are just the best homemade presents a parent can receive.’

The larger components of the house were equally well-planned, explains Sophie. ‘Poppy is coeliac, and I’m very much into nutrition, so the large island is >



**AT HOME WITH...**

**Owners** Retail design assistant Sophie Hulbert and her husband Tim, who works in marketing, bought the house in 2010. They have three children, Poppy, 18, Phoebe, 16 and Saffron, 12, as well as a dog, Herbie, and a cat, Stan.

**House** Five-bed new-build with a kitchen extension added in 2018.





“ WE REALISED THAT EXTENDING GAVE US THE OPPORTUNITY TO BRING IN SOME OF THE QUIRKNESS OF AN OLDER HOME THAT’S EVOLVED OVER TIME ”

**Halfway**  
The shelves allow Sophie to add colour with collections of books. **Bookshelves**, Ralph Alexander; painted in Slate IV, Paint & Paper Library





**Hallway**

In place of a separate office, Sophie transformed an unused corner into a desk area. **Desk** painted in Elephant's Breath, Farrow & Ball. **Chairs**, Northcote Road



**Living room**

Clever planning has given the family extra storage space underneath the windows. **Walls** painted in Slaked Lime Deep, Little Greene

perfect for preparing home-cooked meals. It's also great when we have friends over - we can cover it with nibbles, drinks and candles and have a good catch-up while I finish the cooking. A large pantry was another important part of the kitchen design, to store all the different types of non-grain flours, lentils and legumes, as well my slightly obsessive collection of herbal teas!

Although they are careful and like to look after their home, the family try not to be too precious - the polished limestone floor, for instance, has signs of the girls chasing their beloved Lagotto dog, Herbie, around the kitchen table. 'Scuffs, scratches and paw prints magically seem to reappear, no matter how often I wipe them away,' says Sophie. 'There's even a red-wine ring on the table from a special night we had with friends,' adds Tim. 'Others might see it as damage; we see it as a happy reminder of a great night in.'

'This kitchen definitely makes us feel more sociable and creative,' says Sophie. The couple designed their perfectly-imperfect kitchen extension with the help of Adobe Architects to add character to their modern home. 'We wanted a space that would let us enjoy our hobbies - art, cooking, pottery - but would also enable us to bring in some of the quirkiness of an older style home that's evolved through the generations. Rather than creating a box to square up the back of the >

**LIVING THE DREAM**

When hunting for one-off decorative pieces Sophie and Tim love to meet the maker in person, whether at home or abroad...

**Why is craftsmanship so important to you?**

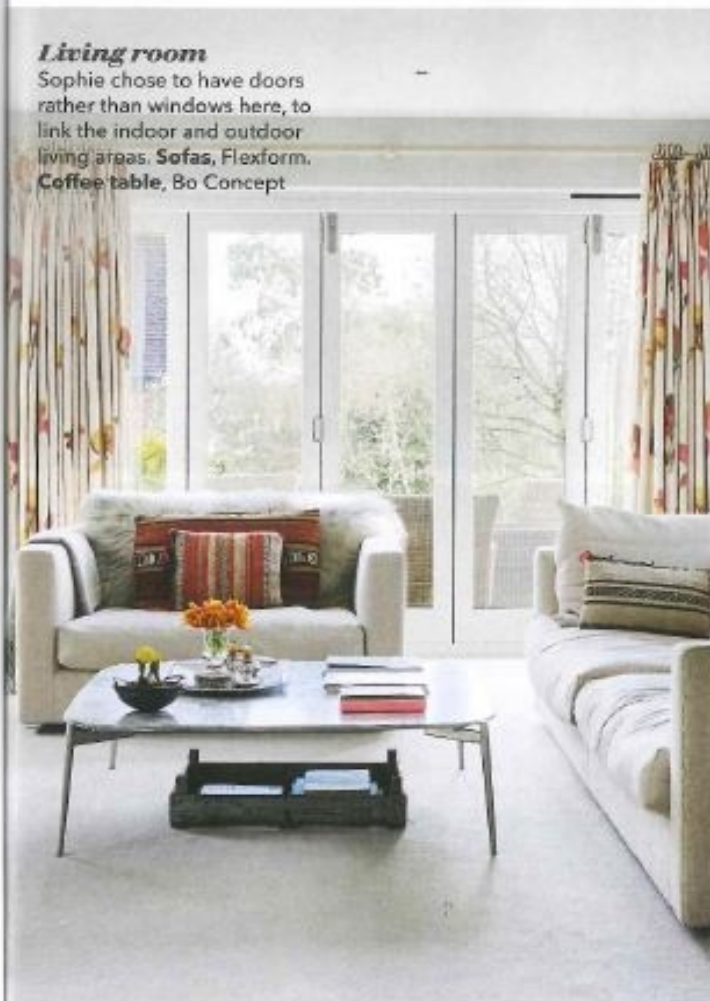
'We believe that true artistry and craftsmanship should be rewarded. Working with local, independent companies, such as Farnham Furnishers, repeatedly over the years, we've built up a rapport - they know how we like to push the boundaries of design and we trust them to pull it off.'

**How do you support makers further afield?**

'When we are on holiday, we love to find little workshops where the maker is working away creating interesting objects.'

**Do you have any favourite pieces?**

'The ones made by our own children!'



**Living room**

Sophie chose to have doors rather than windows here, to link the indoor and outdoor living areas. **Sofas**, Flexform. **Coffee table**, Bo Concept



**Main bedroom**

Placing a plush rug under the bed ensures no cold toes in the morning. Similar thick pile **rug**, La Redoute. **Bed**, Designers Guild





**Utility room**

Invest in beautiful cleaning tools that are a joy to keep out on display. Similar cleaning tools, Lisa Valentine Home. Apron, The Linen Works. Cat basket, Haus



**Utility room**

This is an ideal addition to a country home, helping to keep the kitchen uncluttered. Terrazzo tile flooring, Artisans of Devises. Lights, Holloways of Ludlow

house, we set the extension off to one side to create a more higgledy-piggledy layout. The snug is open to the kitchen-diner, but it's tucked around the corner so there is an element of privacy for the girls.'

'We also changed the orientation of the garden view,' says Tim. 'We put the large windows facing the forest rather than the fence. The black frames really enhance all that greenery, bringing the countryside into the house.'

Luckily, with its high eco credentials, the planners were pretty lenient when it came to knocking out the back of the original house and adding this light-filled space. 'Before we built the extension, we almost craved the slight draught from the rickety old windows we'd had in our previous home - a turn-of-the-century house in the same village,' says Sophie. 'We loved that place and didn't want to leave the lifestyle of the local community behind - with its country pubs, cricket team and the girls' friends all within safe walking distance - but we wanted more space and a generous garden. So we were lucky to find a house for sale so close by, and, after spending a winter here, we fully appreciated how this building is sealed pretty tight.'

'And now that we've given the house a more sociable and family-friendly layout, with the help of the new extension,' says Tim, 'we've pretty much future-proofed it for the next few chapters of our lives.'

**ON OUR DOORSTEP**

**Visit...** 'Frensham Little Pond ([nationaltrust.org.uk](http://nationaltrust.org.uk)) has picnic spots and a cafe for refreshments after an energetic walk.'

**Shop at...** 'When I'm in Farnham, I like to pick up a coffee from Crema ([krema.co.uk](http://krema.co.uk)) and walk down to Castle Street Flowers ([castlestreetflowers.co.uk](http://castlestreetflowers.co.uk)), an amazing florist whose shop - a continental-style orangery - spills out onto the cobbled street; the smell of the freshly cut flowers is just heavenly. I also love The Gilded Cabinet ([thegildedcabinet.co.uk](http://thegildedcabinet.co.uk)) in Alton for lovely fabrics, furniture, kitchenware and lighting.'

**Go for a meal at...** 'The Anchor Inn ([anchorinnatlowerfroyle.co.uk](http://anchorinnatlowerfroyle.co.uk)) at Lower Froyle is a classic country pub with low ceilings and a cosy feel. It's perfect at any time of year, but especially in the winter with the log fire burning.'

FEATURE: NICKIE JONES PHOTOGRAPHS: BRENT DAREY STYLING: PIPPA RIMMER