

HOMEOWNERS Martin and Gill Sutcliffe, and son Henry
LOCATION Derbyshire PROJECT Remodel and extension
SIZE: 245m² (originally 180m²) BUILD TIME July 2017 - June 2018
BUILD COST £250,000 ESTIMATED VALUE Unknown



Coming HOME

Keen to move back to Derbyshire following retirement, Martin and Gill were in luck: their old family home was for sale and they were ready for a big project



THE BUILD

The project's transition from an old, familiar home of the past to bright, vibrant home for the future involved a significant timber frame extension to the rear as well as a dramatic reimagining of its interior. This meant extensive work, mostly to the rear of the property, as rooms at the front were mostly retained in their original form.



BEFORE: THE OLD FAMILY HOME



DURING: THE EARLY STAGES OF THE EXTENSION



DURING: A NEW FIRST FLOOR DORMER BEDROOM IS ADDED



DURING: BUILDING THE NEW EXTENSION WITH TIMBER FRAME



DURING: THE EXTERNAL WORK IN PROGRESS



DURING: THE NEW LIVING ROOM TAKES SHAPE



DURING: OPENING UP THE BACK OF THE PROPERTY



DURING: THE NEW REAR ELEVATION REVEALS ITSELF



Up and down the land are thousands of perfectly sound properties – often bungalows – waiting for the right person to breathe new life into them. For one nondescript 1920s dormer bungalow in rural Derbyshire, those people were Martin and Gill Sutcliffe, who set out to enlarge the property, create light-filled open-plan spaces and make the home accessible for their adult son Henry, who uses a wheelchair.

What makes their story so remarkable is that they'd previously lived in the same bungalow for 20 years. They sold it to a good friend when they relocated to Bristol for Martin's work, before retiring back to the area a few years later. In a neat turn of fate, it happened that their friend was ready to sell the bungalow back to them.

Both enjoyed living in the bungalow and knew every skirting board, door handle and light switch. "It was my little stronghold," says Gill. But moving back after so long was strangely unnerving. "When you come back, you see it with a fresh eye. On my first night back, I looked around and thought — what have we done?" says Martin.

"Like many houses of the era it had been designed to a pattern design and plonked on the site. But these old buildings are built well, and they're adaptable. I do believe that these buildings can change with time."

The design takes shape

Fortunately, Martin is a retired commercial architect and Gill has some clear ideas about interiors. Neither wanted to demolish and rebuild, so instead they sketched out their ideas to significantly extend and remodel the bungalow. They worked through the concept with Leicester-based Feldmann Architects;



PROJECT TIMELINE

Plot purchased Aug 2016
Planning application submitted Nov 2016
Planning permission approved Feb 2017
Start on site July 2017
Foundations complete Sept 2017
Watertight shell Feb 2018
First fix Feb 2018
Second fix Apr 2018
Final decoration May 2018
Occupied Jun 2018

“ Like many houses of the era it had been designed to a pattern design, and plonked on the site. But these old buildings are built well, and they're adaptable

local architects Mansell Architects, a husband and wife team, took over supervising on site.

In essence, the couple have kept the floorplan at the front of the house, knocked down most of the internal walls and created a large open-plan living space at the rear. Full-height sliding doors here finally allow the family to enjoy a full view of the garden. “The house progressively gets more open as you get to the back,” says Martin. “Even with such large spans, all of the extension was built with timber — there is no steel in the house at all, which can be expensive and difficult to handle.”

Originally the couple envisaged a new, sleek, cedar-clad box at the rear, but the planners insisted on a pitched roof to mirror other rooflines on the same street. “That was irritating because you can only see a fleeting view of the rear from a side road,” says Martin. “To address it, we put in a gabled roof to mask the boxed element. It was very complicated for the builder to break through the roof, but he was very thorough and did an excellent job.”

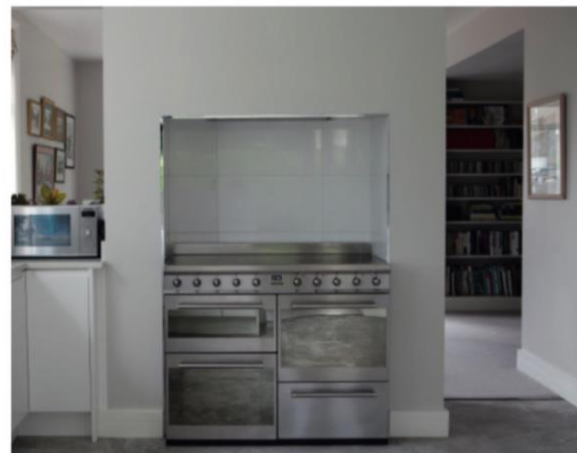
While the rear has been thoroughly extended and opened up, the street-facing façade is a different story. “We wanted to keep the same façade at the front, just tidying it up a bit, so that the bungalow was not really showy on the street. But when you came inside, you get the wow factor,” says Gill.

The only two changes to the front are the timber cladding on the gables — a subtle nod to the new cedar cladding at the rear — and the replacement of the old, somewhat battered, roof tiles. Martin and Gill found a supplier in Stoke on Trent who could get tiles the same size as the originals, this time in brindle blue rather than red. “We wanted to keep faith with the original, so that it looks like it would have done when it was new in the 1920s,” he explains.

An accessible design

The couple also wanted to ensure the bungalow was wheelchair-friendly for their son, and futureproofed for their own later years. Many of the accessible elements are subtle, such as extra-wide doors, waist-height light switches and a level threshold at the rear that's completely flush to the floor — the latter was a little more expensive than standard, but offers easy access for Henry. An automatic electric door in his bed sitting room allows him to come and go as he wishes.

“We wanted to avoid anything that looks like a hospital,” says Martin. “It's possible to create large circulation spaces and living spaces in a way that people don't notice; they just see that it's generous.”



DINING AREA
Rotating the staircase and moving a small bathroom allowed the Sutcliffes to create a thoroughfare to this newly created, open-plan space. Much of the ground floor features porcelain tiles from Porcelanosa.

KITCHEN
The kitchen replaces the old dining room and now sits at the heart of the newly expanded home. The white handleless kitchen was sourced from 1st Class Kitchens. A sleek range sits in the former chimney breast (top).



SELECTED COSTS

Windows	£24,480
Kitchen and utility units	£21,400
Woodburning stove	£7,500
Stairs and balcony, glass balustrades	£4,500
Bathroom sanitaryware and units	£3,800
Floor tiling	£1,700

All figures include VAT

Smooth construction

The build itself was a relatively drama-free process, with few overspends on their original £250,000 build budget — thanks mainly to a good building team. Only a couple of unpleasant surprises occurred. The first took place, as is often the case, in the first week on site. A trench collapsed after the groundworkers dug a trench down to three metres to meet the requirements of the building inspector, who was concerned about tree roots. It required £4,000 worth of concrete to fill the hole — a sizeable chunk of their contingency.

The second upset concerned insulation. “We did get hit two years ago, when there was a great hike in the price of insulation — it went up 40%,” remembers Martin. “The insulation we wanted was rising in price because of oil prices and a poor exchange rate.”

The project, including constructing the timber frame extension, took a total of 12 months in the end, rather than the planned nine. “Horrendous snow stopped the site twice, but also we had a lot of external works done including a terrace underneath the large windows at the back and a further terrace,” explains Gill. “We knew that if we didn’t get the second terrace done at the same time as the rest of the work, it wouldn’t happen.”

While Martin and Gill have no plans to repeat their experience, they’re absolutely thrilled with what they’ve achieved — and the rest of the family feel the same way too. “My daughter is pleased that we’ve got our old house back, and that we’ve got plenty of space for the grandchildren to run around in. And the friend that we bought the house from absolutely loves what we have done.”

FLOORPLANS

The original dormer bungalow has been extensively remodelled and enlarged, with a new semi-open plan living/dining/kitchen space running from the front to the back of the ground floor. More private areas, like Henry’s en suite bed sitting room off the living space, are situated along the other side of the central hall and staircase. A curved wall in the hallway has been retained and extended, and the staircase moved to one side to create a lighter interior with views of the garden from the front of the house.

Upstairs, two small bedrooms have made way for three larger ones, including a master en suite, a bathroom and a storage area.

BEFORE FIRST FLOOR



AFTER FIRST FLOOR



FIRST FLOOR (BEFORE)

- 1 Storage
- 2 Bedroom

FIRST FLOOR (AFTER)

- 1 Storage
- 2 Bedroom
- 3 Bathroom

BEFORE GROUND FLOOR



AFTER GROUND FLOOR



GROUND FLOOR (BEFORE)

- 1 Kitchen
- 2 Utility
- 3 Dining room
- 4 Living room
- 5 Bedroom
- 6 Bathroom

GROUND FLOOR (AFTER)

- 1 Living room
- 2 Kitchen
- 3 Dining room
- 4 Study
- 5 Utility
- 5 Shower room
- 7 En suite
- 8 Bedroom





KEY SUPPLIERS

CONCEPT ARCHITECT

Feldmann
Architects: www.feldmanns.net

TECHNICAL DESIGN

Mansel Architects: 01773 825693

MAIN CONTRACTOR

Claremont Construction:
www.claremontconstructionltd.co.uk

CEDAR CLADDING SUPPLIER

Benchmark Timber:
www.benchmarktimber.co.uk

ROOF TILE SUPPLIER BMI Redland:
www.redland.co.uk

WINDOW SUPPLIER

Architectural Windows: www.architecturalwindows.org.uk

KITCHEN SUPPLIER 1st Class Kitchens
www.1stclasskitchensltd.co.uk

WOODBURNING STOVE SUPPLIER

Robeys www.robeys.co.uk

BATHROOM SANITARYWARE SUPPLIER

Bathstore: www.bathstore.com

GLASS BALUSTRADE SUPPLIER

Elysion: www.elysion.uk.com

FLOORING TILINGS Porcelanosa:
www.porcelanosa.co.uk

FLOOR COVERINGS

Classic Carpets & Flooring:
www.classiccarpetsofbelper.co.uk

INTERIOR PAINT Farrow & Ball:
www.farrow-ball.com

GARDEN DESIGNER

Victoria Philpott Gardens:
victoriaphilpottgardens.com



FIRST FLOOR
The view from the landing (top) emphasises the build's light and airy feel, with the glass balustrade allowing natural light to make the maximum impact

BEDROOMS
Martin and Gill's works have expanded the functionality of the first floor, freeing up space to maximise the ground floor's utility as an everyday living area

