

THIS PAGE The garden room is made truly stunning by the view of Susan's beautiful south-west facing garden and was designed by architect Paul Callaghan. The coffee table is from BoConcept and cost €650. Susan had the sofas in

her last house and simply had them recovered to match the new colour scheme. Susan's round table is bespoke from Danish Design and the basket weave chairs are from Minima. The specialist blinds in the garden room are from Luxaflex



Great ideas

Spray or paint old furniture to match your colour scheme: Susan has recycled many pieces of her furniture to suit their new settings, giving them a new lease of life, notably the hall console table which has been sprayed silver; and the dressing table, bedside tables and wicker chair in the guest bedroom, refinished in Dulux Eggshell 30YY51-098.

Recover dining chairs in pairs! Susan's dining chairs look absolutely stunning and really make the dining room; they have been recovered in the 'Linara' washable linen Union range, part of the Romo 'Plains' collection; there are 220 colours to choose from in this range, so you will find plenty of choice to suit any colour scheme.

Have you room for a dressing area? If you have, go for it and say goodbye to clutter in the bedroom for good. Susan's beautiful built in storage from Robert Mooney looks great and is designed to hold an amazing amount of clothing, and shoes.

LIGHT FANTASTIC

Susan Barnes has transformed this 1930s semi-detached into a contemporary symphony in light and colour with some added inspiration from her favourite *House and Home* magazine.

words and photos: **Barbara Egan/Reportage**

Homeowner tips

■ Engage a project manager. I was really lucky that my son Simon Farrell is a commercial designer and did the project management for me, I couldn't have done it without him, I would have gone completely mad!

■ Use an expert to help in product selection and colour co-ordination. I used Optimise Design.

■ Buy as many interiors magazines as you can, I bought enough to wallpaper my whole house, but they were worth every red cent. I got 90% of my ideas from them, especially *House and Home*, the best Irish magazine. Irish is important, as all the sources can be accessed here.





“I had lived for many years in a house on an acre of gardens, so I suppose I was really downsizing my garden!” says Susan Barnes, retired owner of a catering business, who now lives in this exquisite 1930s semi-detached house in south Dublin.

She spent three years viewing houses and attending auctions before she found exactly what she wanted. “I fell in love with the garden first, it was the right size, faced south west, and was full of old rambling roses. The location was also ideal, so it did tick all the boxes. The house was perfectly liveable, but needed updating.”

Susan felt the rooms were quite small and a little dark, she wanted to bring as much light into the house as possible. A sociable and involved grandmother, she enjoys family parties and wanted a large open space for entertaining, suitable for children to run around and adults to relax and enjoy themselves. She is a keen gardener and wanted to make the most of the lovely view of the garden to the rear of the house, so she decided on a large open-plan kitchen and garden room extension, opening out to the garden with plenty of floor-to-ceiling glazing and large doors.

THIS PAGE Susan’s fabulous kitchen in an easy-clean white gloss finish with taupe silestone worktops comes from Robert Mooney Custom Built Furniture in Delgany Co. Wicklow, and contrasts beautifully with the black glossy Aga, providing a sophisticated neutral backdrop for the garden view beyond. All kitchen cabinetry and Aga supplied by Robert Mooney Furniture. The Aga is gas fired, and cost €13,500.

The kitchen floor is finished in Italian porcelain tiles ‘Orte’ 60 x 60cm at €75 + VAT sq m from Regan Tile Design. The walls are painted in ‘Nougat’ from Colortrend. ABOVE The cabinetry in the alcoves, which houses Susan’s television and home computer was made to match the kitchen by Robert Mooney Custom Built Furniture. The handsome contemporary gas fire from Hearth and Home cost €2,500





The house was originally built as a one-off semi-detached by a builder for his two daughters back in the 1930s, and as the house next door was undergoing renovation by its architect owner, Susan felt it would be a good idea to talk to him, as the houses were a matched pair.

She ended up engaging her neighbour, architect Paul Callaghan to design her renovation too. She explained her idea for opening up the back of the house for entertainment, and also told him that she wanted to knock the existing porch and rebuild it whilst extending the sitting room to the front of the house to the same line. The two neighbours decided to recreate the front elevations of the two houses as mirror images of each other. Susan also wanted to divide the large garage into a laundry room and garage, and build a dressing room and ensuite to the master bedroom over it.

GETTING STARTED

Once the plans were agreed, it was time to get started, and Susan was excited, thinking about moving into her new house in the planned six months time. "Then they discovered asbestos in the ceilings and the work ground to a halt. Out went the builders, in came the men in the masks and the building work was delayed again, and again, and again," says Susan. Twelve months later, she moved into a half-finished house. "It was still another five months before I got the

LEFT Susan's dining room is stunning with a neutral backdrop of 'Snowpea' wall paint from Colortrend showcasing her old dining room chairs reupholstered in funky shades from the 'Linara' washable linen Union range, part of the Romo 'Plains' collection BELOW Susan reused her I-shaped sofa and

coffee table from her previous house; the sofa is from Minnie Peters and cost €7000, the table is also Minnie Peters at €1500. The wall colour is Snowpea from Colortrend. Curtain Fabric is from the Romo 'Plains' collection in raw silk, all curtains are from Special Touch Interiors



builders out, and sat down with a bottle of champagne to celebrate!" she says.

One thing that there was no problem with was the kitchen. "That went really well. I did my research and contracted Robert Mooney Furniture to build the kitchen, which was my best decision in the whole project. The kitchen was so gorgeous, and Robert so helpful, that I asked him to build all the wardrobes and bathroom cabinets too, and they all turned out really well," says Susan.

"Most of my furniture is recycled from my previous house, and looks really well in the new setting, but I did do a lot of work and research on the new fittings, décor and colours.

Inspiration came principally from interiors magazines, especially *House and Home*, and I had a consultant at Optimise Design to bounce all my ideas off, which was really helpful in pulling the look together, and planning colourways," says Susan. "I was lucky in that my son Simon is a commercial interior designer and helped me out a lot too. But I would warn anyone thinking about taking on a project like this; it is hugely time-consuming to find what you want, and to actually get what you want too!"

"Now that I've finished, of course I totally love it, it is heaven, and a fantastic house for parties and grandchildren. I love the light in the garden room, and I love my garden too." «

At home with Susan

Favourite gadget? The TV in the bathroom! I love it, the most relaxing gadget ever. It's a luxury which is really worth it.

Best buy? The Aga; a boon for comfort and cooking.

What could you simply not live without? A really good power shower. With a decent shower I can face almost anything!

Have you learned anything? When buying an old house, don't skimp on the survey. Spend the money getting a proper top-to-bottom survey and at least you will know what you are letting yourself in for.

Top tip? Concentrate on getting the basics right; spend the time and the money on making sure the roof, construction, plumbing and heating and the electrics are right, and worry about the décor only when everything is sound. It's no use having a beautiful sitting room with water pouring down the walls from a leaky roof or pipe.

THIS PAGE The feature wall in the guest room is papered in 'Wisteria' colourway 'Lint' from the Andrew Hardiman 'Siecle' collection at Kuboaa and can be ordered online at £55 per roll. All woodwork is Dulux Eggshell 30YY51-098. Susan bought the throw at Laura Ashley, and the cushions are all from Zara Home. Blinds, from Special Touch Interiors



THIS PAGE Susan loves a touch of luxury in the bedroom and the bedlinen from Bottom Drawer at Brown Thomas fits the bill. The carpet was bought from TC Matthews Carpets and is pure new wool at €100 sq m. The wall colour is 'Wafer' and woodwork is finished in Dulux Eggshell 30YY51-098. Susan bought the mirrored bedside cabinets in Mimosa in Dun Laoghaire. Curtain Fabric is from the Romo 'Plains' collection in raw silk in 'Cream', supplied by Special Touch Interiors
 TOP LEFT Cabinetry in the master en-suite was built by

Robert Mooney Custom Built Furniture and all the sanitary fittings are Duravit from Waterloo Bathrooms in Dun Laoghaire. Regan Tile Design supplied the tiles, which are Italian porcelain 'Blcno' 40 x 40cm at €82 plus VAT sq m, with detailing in the niches in silver glass mosaic, at €39.89 plus VAT per sheet. Susan's special luxury, the bathroom TV was supplied and installed by Cloney Audio in Blackrock
 LEFT Susan's bedroom is clutter free and elegant thanks to the fantastic and very handsome built-in walnut storage in the adjacent dressing room



houseandhome Address Book

■ Architect: Paul Callaghan Architects, Dun Laoghaire, Dublin. Tel: 01 280 9711

■ Bathrooms: Waterloo Bathrooms Tel: 01 284 2100 www.waterloo.ie

■ Bathroom TV: Supplied and installed by Cloney Audio in Blackrock

Tel: 901 288 9449 www.cloneyaudio.ie

■ Carpet: TC Matthews Carpets Tel: 01 672 9353 web.tcmatthews.ie

■ Cast iron radiator: Hevac Tel: 01 419 1919 www.hevac.ie

■ Curtains: Special Touch Interiors Tel: 01 2190225 www.specialtouchinteriors.ie

■ Fireplace: KEM fireplaces Tel: 1890 535 535 www.gasfires.ie

■ Furniture: Robert Mooney Custom Built Furniture Tel: 086 254 6174

■ Basket weave chairs: Minima Tel: 01 662 7894 www.minima.ie

■ Bedside cabinets: Mimosa Tel: 01 280 8166

■ Coffee table: BoConcept Tel: 01 2932008 www.boconcept.ie

■ Round table: Danish Design Tel: 01 278 9040 www.danishdesign.ie

■ Sofa and table: Minnie Peters Tel: 01 293 3919 www.minniepeters.com

■ Gas fire: Hearth and Home Tel: 01 620 0100 www.hearthandhome.ie

■ Kitchen cabinetry and Aga: Robert Mooney Custom Built Furniture Tel: 086 254 6174

www.robertmooneyfurniture.com

■ National Lighting Showrooms Tel: 01 709 9070 www.nationallighting.ie

■ Paint: Colortrend (General Paints) Tel: 01 628 8224 www.colortrend.ie

■ Project Manager: Simon Farrell. Tel: 087 245 1036

■ Optimise Design Tel: 01 2608788 www.optimise-design.com

■ Rug Art Tel: 01 269 0505 www.rugart.ie

■ Specialist blinds in the garden room are from Luxaflex. Tel: 1850 304 051 www.luxaflex.com

■ Tiles: Regan Tile Design, Tel: 01 280 0921 www.regantiledesign.com

■ Wallpaper: 'Wisteria' colourway 'Lint' from the Andrew Hardiman 'Siecle' collection at Kuboaa

Tel: +44(0)1225 44089 www.kubooa.co.uk



“ MOST OF MY FURNITURE IS RECYCLED FROM MY PREVIOUS HOUSE, AND LOOKS REALLY WELL IN THE NEW SETTING, BUT I DID DO A LOT OF WORK AND RESEARCH ON THE NEW FITTINGS, DÉCOR AND COLOURS ”