

EXTREME Transformations



The plain Sixties house didn't have much kerb appeal

BEFORE

AFTER



Cedar weatherboards contrast with aluminium window frames

A new flat roof and a wood-clad extension have given the house a contemporary look

From drab Sixties house... to sleek, modern home

Lisa and Tony Short added a flat roof and cedar cladding to turn an uninspiring detached house into a striking contemporary home

Take the 60-SECOND TOUR

THE PROPERTY

A four-bedroom, Sixties detached house in Gosport, Hampshire.

WHO LIVES HERE

Lisa and Tony Short, with their son, George, 22, and daughter Charlie, 20.

WHAT THEY DID

The Shorts added extensions at the front, side and rear of the property, and replaced the

pitched roof with a flat design. They removed walls on the ground floor to create an open-plan space. The exterior was rendered and clad in cedar weatherboards.

WHAT IT COST

The couple paid £260,000 for the house in 2009 and spent around £110,000 extending and re-roofing it. It's now worth around £425,000.

FIRST FLOOR ▶
Upstairs there are four bedrooms, one en suite, a dressing room/study and the main bathroom



◀ GROUND FLOOR
There's a shower room to the left of the hallway. The open-plan kitchen-diner with living area leads through to a utility room and storeroom at the front

When Lisa and Tony Short bought their Sixties house in Gosport, Hampshire, they already knew the neighbourhood rather well. Their previous home was an identical property just three doors down, where the couple had completed a massive renovation project, which included building extensions and replacing the roof with a more modern design.

'We decided we wanted to do it all over again, so when a house came up for sale just along the road, it seemed like the perfect opportunity,' says Lisa. 'In fact, we phoned up and made an offer before we'd even been inside, because we knew we would be pulling it apart. We wanted to use our hard-won experience to create something even more contemporary and dramatic than before.'

CUTTING-EDGE DESIGN Having employed him on their previous project, Lisa and Tony decided to ask local building designer, Nigel Lewis of Space & Style Home Design (023 9252 5100; spaceandstyle.co.uk), to reinvent the property inside and out. As before, they were determined that the pitched roof had to go

and their brief to Nigel was to design a flat-roofed, contemporary-looking house. He came up with the idea of using projecting and cantilevered cubes in contrasting materials to form the exterior. 'We love the modern shape and clean lines,' says Tony.

CREATING SPACE Extending to the front, rear and side of the property has provided additional space on both floors. Previously, there were three bedrooms and a bathroom upstairs, but extending and cantilevering means that the first floor now has a larger footprint than the ground floor, with enough space for four bedrooms, one en suite, a main bathroom, plus a dressing room/study.

Downstairs, the removal of internal walls and an extension at the rear of the building has opened up the entire ground floor, providing an open-plan kitchen-diner with living area. 'Our last house had a separate kitchen, and one of the reasons we decided to move was because we wanted a more open-plan layout,' explains Tony. Another extension behind the garage façade at the front of the property has created space for a utility room and storeroom.

Nigel submitted the planning application in January 2010. The new flat roof meant that the →



We love... living in an open-plan space. It really suits our family and is great for entertaining'



house would be lower than before, but, despite receiving no objections, the local planning authority took six months to sign off the plans. This delay meant that building work couldn't begin until autumn 2010 and took place during the winter months, which was far from ideal as the roof needed to be removed as part of the build.

'The entire back of the house came down and the roof came off, so it was completely open to the elements,' says Tony. 'The children went to live with my parents, but Lisa and I converted the old single garage into a temporary home, where we lived with our three dogs for six weeks. After that we moved back into the house and made each of the rooms habitable one at a time, as our budget allowed.'

UNEXPECTED DELAYS Tony is an electrician and acted as the main contractor for the renovation, undertaking as much of the work as possible and employing individual trades where needed. This saved a considerable amount of money, but meant that the house took two years to complete, which was far longer than the couple had originally planned.

Structural steelwork was used to support the cantilevered sections of the building and the new exterior walls were constructed in blockwork and either rendered or clad in cedar weatherboards. Contemporary aluminium-framed windows were installed to match the new grey front door and the fake garage door across the front extension.

The roof was rebuilt and given an additional layer of acoustic insulation, designed to lessen the noise

inside the house when rain falls on the flat surface. A rubberised membrane with a 20-year guarantee forms the outer layer of the roof and a small parapet wall was built around the edge, so that it is possible to install solar panels that will be concealed from view in the future. 'Our immediate neighbours knew what we'd done to our previous house, and were excited to see how this one would turn out, which was one of the benefits of staying in the same road,' says Tony.

STARTING FROM SCRATCH Internally, the house is unrecognisable from its former layout. Internal walls were removed at the back of the house to open up a large open-plan space. The living and dining areas are defined by a partial wall in the centre of the room. The entire property was completely rewired and replumbed, and new flooring was laid throughout. The kitchen has been fitted with a mix of white high-gloss and walnut doors that match the walnut worktop and walnut-effect vinyl floor. 'We went back to the same kitchen and flooring manufacturers we used in our last house,' says Lisa.

The couple have only been living in their revamped house for a short time and don't plan to move again just yet, but they haven't ruled out the idea of tackling another project in the future. 'We enjoy working together to redesign a house,' says Tony. 'Instead of watching TV in the evening, we'll sit down together with the drawings and plan out changes to the interior. Redesigning homes has become a bit of an addiction.'

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Design detail
VINYL FLOOR

Walnut-effect vinyl flooring adds the warm look of wood, but is a more affordable alternative

RENOVATION KNOW-HOW

- Many alterations can be made under **Permitted Development**, meaning you don't need to get planning permission. For more information on planning and building regulations, visit planningportal.gov.uk and always check with your local authority before making any major changes.
- **Keep your neighbours informed** at all stages and you might need to obtain party-wall agreements, too. Check the advice given at planningportal.gov.uk.
- **For extensions and major remodelling**, it's usually advisable to employ an architect to draw up accurate plans: the Royal Institute of British Architects (architecture.com) holds a directory of approved architects.
- **Get at least three quotes for all major purchases**, including when you're hiring tradesmen and, whenever possible, negotiate fixed prices for each job rather than paying a daily rate.
- **It's not usually advisable to undertake major roofing work on a DIY basis.** Go to the National Federation of Roofing Contractors' website (nfr.co.uk) to find a reputable roofer to do the work.
- **Remember to factor delays into the schedule** and always have a contingency pot of money to pay for those unforeseen expenses.



▲ An L-shaped sofa in the corner of the open-plan living area is the perfect place for chilling out. A palette of natural colours creates a tranquil mood

◀ A partial wall visually defines the dining area from the living area in the open-plan space at the rear of the house

IN DETAIL ALTERING A ROOF

The Shorts added a flat roof for a modern look

Lisa and Tony completely altered the shape and pitch of their Sixties home's roof to transform the overall look of the property. Changing the roof in this way involves major structural work, which can be an expensive and disruptive project.

■ Modifying the shape of a roof has a huge impact on the look of a house. Most period and new houses are built with pitched roofs, but flat ones are becoming more popular for ultramodern new builds and extensions.

■ Flat-roofing systems have come a long way since the Sixties and Seventies, when bitumen and asphalt leaked and needed to be frequently replaced. Modern single-ply roofing membranes are highly insulated and built to last.

■ Planning permission isn't usually required for re-roofing your house, subject to certain conditions, but you might need approval if you want to completely change the roof's appearance. Check the government's planning and building regulations guidelines at planningportal.gov.uk.

