

SURFACE MATTERS

Atmospheric colours and lots of rich texture elevate the look of this family bathroom



DESIGNER Susan Venn, director, Susan Venn Design, 01483 342101, susanvenn.com.

What was your brief?

The client, a professional couple with one child, wanted a relaxing, atmospheric bathroom with colour and lots of interesting surfaces. They were desperate to avoid what they called 'the developer look', where every surface is tiled. It needed to resemble another living room. The couple love darker, moodier spaces, hence the leading purple shade that complements the natural greens visible outside.

How did the project begin?

This is a four-bedroom Edwardian home in Surrey, and it seriously deserved a bigger family bathroom. So we repositioned it at the back of the property. Here it looks onto the garden which is very private, so the window could be left unobscured. We took services from an adjacent cloakroom, and replaced the modern window with an Edwardian design to match the rest of the property.

How did you plan the layout?

The first thing is to identify the location of key fittings – in this case the sloped ceiling dictated the shower's position and the rest followed. Then we placed the storage and accessories where they are most convenient. It's amazing how often the bin is forgotten. Here, it is hidden in the vanity drawer.

Can you tell us about the surface materials?

The main tiles on the floor and wall are inexpensive porcelain with a luxurious textured finish. In the shower, we went for a cool chevron design to create a fun contrast. Saving on the tiles left budget for a marble countertop, bath ledge and shower niches. Marble requires a little more care but it is worth it. The wallpaper is not a specialist bathroom paper. As long as it isn't in direct contact with water, and there is decent extraction, a good-quality vinyl is perfectly suitable.

Did you face any major challenges?

Nearly every wall has been built-out to accommodate the new pipework. Unfortunately, we needed to take the waste pipe for the bath along three walls. Achieving the necessary gradients was very difficult, but our brilliant plumber managed it.

How did you dress the space?

The wall lights, blinds and artwork are all similar to those you might find in a living room or bedroom, which is key to achieving a relaxed space that flows effortlessly with the rest of the house. The materials and textures provide warmth, but it's the meticulous planning of tiling, stud walls and fittings that really makes a bathroom work.



ABOVE Two simple glass panels achieve a virtually frameless walk-in shower. The vanity and mirror cabinets are recessed into a stud wall for maximum storage and a sleek finish. **RIGHT** Using rich colours and textured finishes for the surfaces gives the bathroom the desired living-room treatment.

WHERE TO BUY

FITTINGS Matki EauZone wet room panel, 80cm wide, £681.60; Matki EauZone wet room panel, 90cm wide, £700.80; Bisque Classic towel rail radiator in Anthracite, £774; Matki Universal 40 Colour shower tray, 120x90cm, £379.20; Keuco Royal integral illuminated mirror cabinet, £2,894.64, all CP Hart, cphart.co.uk. **Bespoke double vanity unit** lacquered in Farrow & Ball's Brassica with Cararra marble top, £4,000, Susan Venn Design, susanvenn.com. **Malia freestanding bath**, £1,850; **Logic concealed dual control shower**, £400; **Logic wall-mounted round shower rose**, £250; **Logic wall-mounted three-hole bath filler**, £275; **Logic wall-mounted three-hole basin mixers**, £250 each, all Fired Earth, firedearth.com. **Building work and installation** by Acer Developments, acerdevelopments.com. **SURFACES** Hessian Nero porcelain floor tiles, from £41.93sq m; **Monastir Dove matt chevron glazed wall tiles**, £57.39sq m, both Mandarin Stone, mandarinstone.com. **Elitis Eldorado vinyl wallpaper**, £239.80 for a 10m roll (1m wide), Abbott & Boyd, abbottandboyd.co.uk. **Walls in French Grey 113 intelligent matt emulsion**, £48.50 for 2.5L, Little Greene, littlegreene.com. **ACCESSORIES** Pillar LED 60cm wall lights in weathered brass, £599 each, Davey Lighting, uk.originalbtc.com.

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