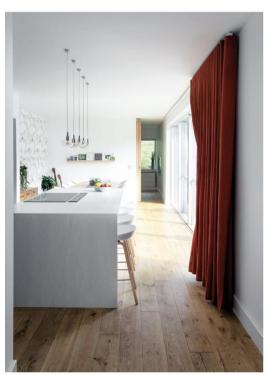


## **G**D HOMES SCOTLAND

n an elevated position at one end of a steep and narrow winding road, the gatehouse Denise Gray, 44, and her husband David, 45, bought in 2006 was lovely, but not big enough for a family home. We had plans drawn up for a two-phase extension and added a bedroom, utility room and extended the kitchen in 2007,' explains Denise. 'When it came to the second phase, planned for 2012, we no longer liked the proposed layout. New plans were drawn up, which would create an open-plan living space with bigger bedrooms and more bathrooms. But it was expensive, used up a lot of the garden, and called for a new roof.'

A friend introduced David to Graeme Andrew, an architect and partner at Atastudio, and he asked his opinion about the plans. I thought it was a lot of money to spend on extending that type of property as the relative gains were quite small,' explains Graeme. I said that if it was mine, I would knock it down and start again. With the VAT saving on a self-build project, it made financial sense, and Denise and David would get the house they wanted.' >>>





ABOVE AND LEFT The kitchen and dining area has plenty of space for busy family life, from the island, which is mode from solid surface Krion, to the ten-seater table from Heal's. The Conker wallpaper is by Petronella Hall

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## **G**D HOMES SCOTLAND

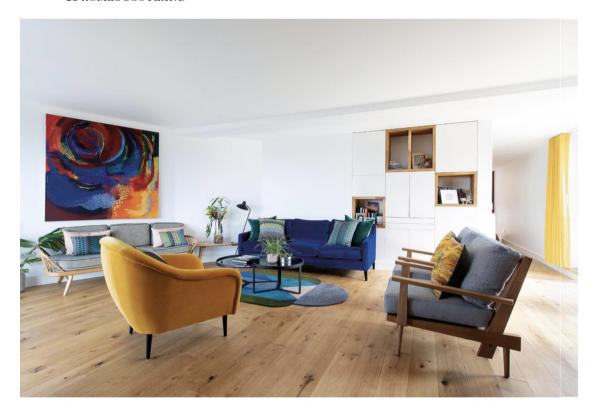
Thinking no more about the conversation, Graeme was surprised when David, who is a company director, called him several weeks later saying he thought they should build a house together. The couple had the opportunity to buy land at the back of their garden, taking the plot up to about an acre. 'David had planning, contractors, everything in place for the proposed extension, but had cancelled the lot. I knew the project was going to be lots of fun and something special,' Graeme says.

While the original gatehouse was traditional in design, the couple wanted something rather more daring for their new home, with more space for their daughter Erin, 12, and son Lewis, nine. At the top of a rocky hill with views across the village and surrounded by woodland on one side, the site is unique. 'Graeme and his partner Hazel came up with about seven different models and we more or less took the bits we liked best from each one,' explains Denise. 'We finally agreed on a layout set over three levels with our 'D'

The original gatehouse was traditional in design, but the couple wanted something rather more daring for their new home



#### **GD HOMES SCOTLAND**



bedroom and the children's rooms on the lower ground floor, the living, dining and kitchen in the middle, and guest bedroom and study at the top.'

Keen to ensure that the new-build would be as energy-efficient as possible, the couple incorporated a plant room into the design so they could install a ground-source heat pump, mechanical ventilation with heat-recovery system (MVHR) and Tesla power walls, which would store energy from the solar panels to power the house and their electric cars.

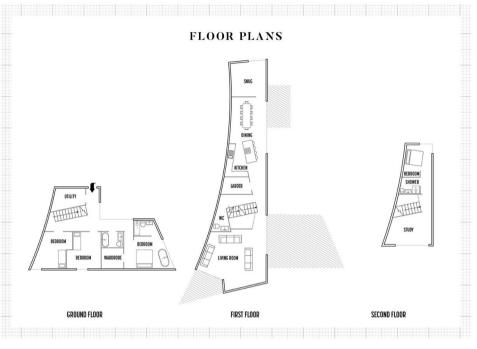
In May 2017 the family moved into a rented house in the village and the bulk of the work was completed in two years. It was an emotional rollercoaster, says Denise. There was a period of about three months when nothing happened. It wasn't the construction team's fault as the steel frame manufacturer let us down and then some of it was missing. We had started to pay the mortgage in addition to our rent and that was hard. But there were days when we would visit and we could see huge leaps forward.'

Getting the house designed and made was a complex matter. 'Structurally, it was complicated because it is built on a steel skeleton. We had to come up with ways to hold it up as well as anchor it into the ground because the wind going underneath was a potential hazard,' says Graeme. The solution was a steel frame structure that forms a bridge over the carport, with a cantilever that pushes the living space out towards the valley.

The angular rooms and expanses of glazing also required a creative approach to ensure the frame was hidden from view. Denise, who is a countryside ranger, commissioned interior designer Anna Campbell-Jones to help with the living spaces and terraces. 'David and Denise love colour and vintage furniture, and incorporating them helped soften the newness,' she says.

Though the project may have taken several twists and turns, the family's home stands proudly in its landscape as well as being an integral part of it. Thave said I'd never do it again, but if we ever decided to move, it would involve another self-build, 'says Denise. 60

ABOVE The living room shelving was created using Ikea kitchen cabinets that have been built around solid oak frames











## **SUPPLIERS**

## PROJECT TEAM

Architect Graeme and Hazel Andrew,
Atastudio (atastudio.com)
Structural engineer lan Douglas,
Design ID (designid.co.uk)
Main contractor John Miller Construction
(johnmillerconstruction.co.uk)
Interior Design Anna Campbell-Jones,
Habitus (habitus.design)

STRUCTURE
Steel frame erection AL Perrie
(014) 644 2240)
Windows and doors
Velfac (velfac.co.uk)

# Staircase and external railings/platforms

McLaughlan Fabrication (m-fab.com) **Sedum roof** Rubberseal (rubberseal.com)

Cedral weatherboard cladding Marley (marley.co.uk)

Black zinc ERBS (0141 563 5051) Landscaping Bauen Construction (07834 150 996)

Planting/soft landscaping Mhairi Auld Garden Design (mhairiauld.co.uk)

Rock escarpment planting Kevock Garden Plants (kevockgarden.co.uk) Stonework and walls MS Stone (msstoneltd.co.uk)

Tesla batteries and sunpower solar panels Ceiba Renewables (ceiba-renewables.co.uk)

Ground-source heat pump, MVHR system and underfloor heating

Anderson Floor Warming & Renewables (andersonfloorwarming.co.uk)

FIXTURES AND FITTINGS Bathrooms Victor Paris (victorparis.com) Kitchen Aspire Trade Kitchens (aspiretradekitchens.co.uk) **Lighting/smart home system** D3 Audio Visual (d3av.co.uk)

Tiles and kitchen island Porcelanosa (porcelanosa.com) Water feature Splash Gordon

Water feature Splash Gordon (splashgordon.co.uk)

FURNITURE & ACCESSORIES
Upholstered door, curtains,
wallpaper, living room furniture
and rug, and terrace furniture
Anna Campbell-Jones, Habitus
Dining table Heal's (heals.com)
Dining chairs and island stools
Hay (hay,dk)