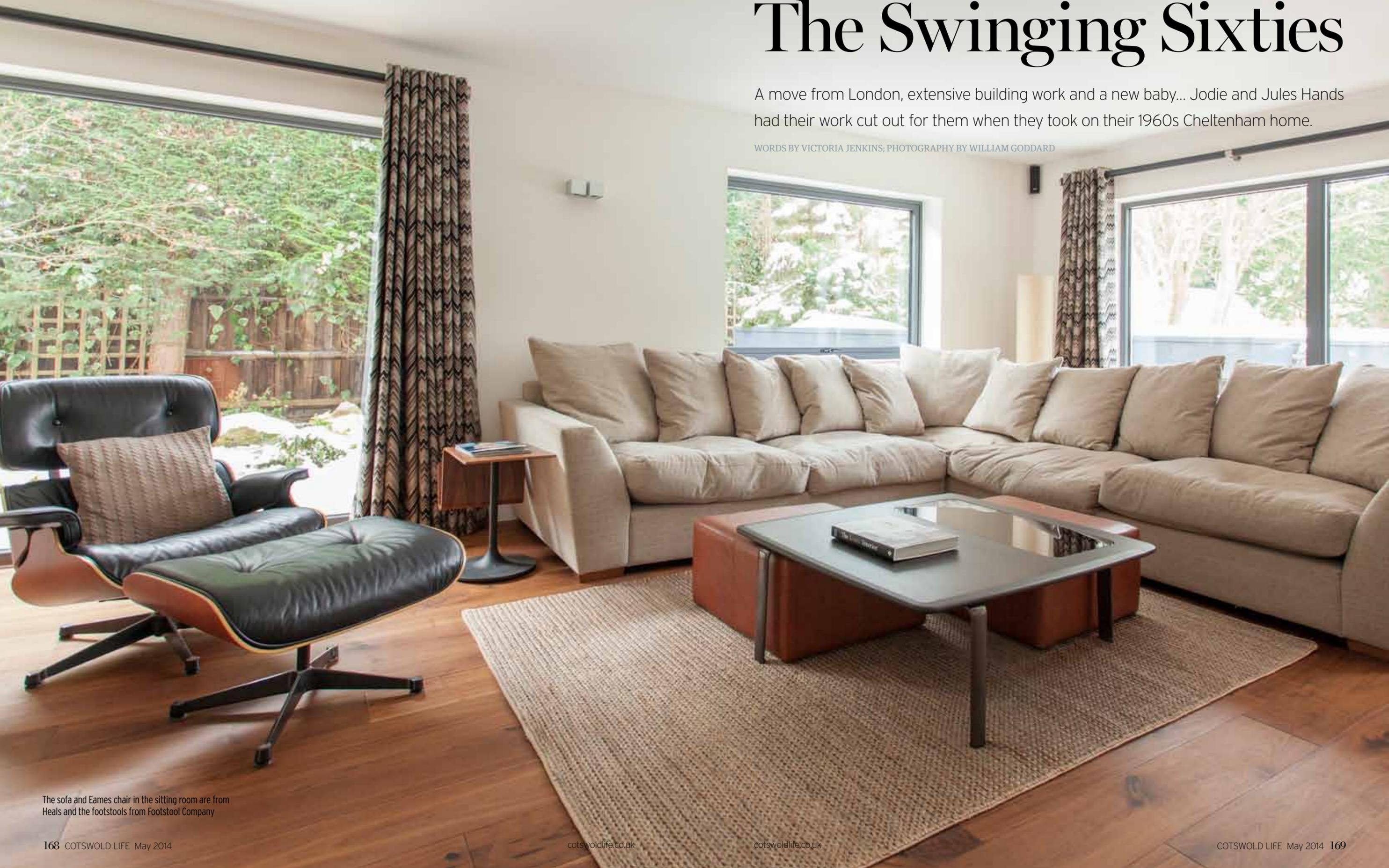




The Swinging Sixties

A move from London, extensive building work and a new baby... Jodie and Jules Hands had their work cut out for them when they took on their 1960s Cheltenham home.

WORDS BY VICTORIA JENKINS; PHOTOGRAPHY BY WILLIAM GODDARD



The sofa and Eames chair in the sitting room are from Heals and the footstools from Footstool Company



The concealed white high-gloss storage units running along the wall behind the sink are quite unobtrusive as they are recessed and seem to be merely a wall covering. However, they have lift-up doors and the worktop runs straight into them so food-mixers and other kitchen accessories can slide out easily

From the outside Jodie and Jules Hands' 1960s house does not look to have changed much - except in a few details such as bringing forward the front door and steps. But inside so many walls and floors have been moved (or removed altogether) that the previous owners would never recognise it.

"As it happens when we first came to view it we weren't too impressed," says Jodie. However, as the couple went on to see more houses, it began to grow on them as they could see its potential and loved the location.

"We were moving from a two bedroom flat in London because we were ready to get out of the city and we decided on Cheltenham as I grew up here and Jules likes the countryside," says Jodie. "Jules has the same job in insurance broking but now commutes and works from home. At first we thought we wanted a period property, but Julian also likes modern architecture which is how we chose this one and brought the interior into the 21st century."

So the Hands bought the four-bedroom house in January 2011 but rented nearby while they waited, first for planning permission to be granted and then for a great deal of building work to be carried

“The walnut effect matches the walnut joinery throughout the rest of the house from the stairs to the built-in shelving in other rooms



The study is painted in 'Slipper Satin' by Farrow & Ball. The rug is from Heals, and Tim Buckingham of Woodchester Cabinet Makers made the walnut desk and the walnut built-in shelving



out. Architects Stanley Partnerships did the drawings and planning permission came through easily as the couple did not wish to extend but reconfigure the internal layout and change the look of the windows.

Jodie became pregnant with Chloe while they were renting and the couple only moved into their new home just before Christmas (2011) and a month before Chloe (now two) was born. The ground floor was the area where most of the redesign took place as several walls have been rebuilt in a different position to create an ante-room, a large sitting room and a study beyond.

Upstairs they removed an unwanted en suite guest bathroom and took out an area of flooring, so creating a double height ceiling for the study area below and a galleried landing above. This allows more light to flood in and the couple thinks this is one of their best decisions, along with installing solar panels in the roof for constant hot water. The remaining bathroom, shower room and downstairs WC were all refurbished with Obsidian suites from Bence of Cheltenham. Slate tiles from Kirkstone Quarry were used for both the en suite and the family bathroom flooring, and milk glass wall tiles by Zenith for the family bathroom.

However what has had the biggest effect on the house are the changes they made made to the large extension at the rear. This was divided into three areas with two stud walls. "The first area was the kitchen, ►

Top: In the main bedroom is a Heals bed with a BHS duvet cover. The walls are painted in 'Skimming Stone' by Farrow and Ball

Above: The guest bedroom has 'Forest' wallpaper by Cole & Son, and the bright Lomond check curtain fabric is by Osborne and Little. The bed is made by James Greer and holds storage

Right: The cot in Chloe's room is from John Lewis and the drawers by Purvis and Purvis. The wardrobes are by Mothercare. Little Greene's 'Rolling Fog Pale' is on the walls, and the bright green rug is by Ikea



the second a family room and the third was just very small at the end with a desk," says Jodie. "We decided to remove the stud walls and turn the whole space into a huge kitchen-diner. The existing kitchen actually wasn't very old and was quite nice but it was small compared to what we have now." Work began on the new kitchen in April 2011 using local workmen overseen by a project manager. First they changed the extension roof from pitched to flat, added three roof lights and gave it a sedum cover as this is low maintenance instant greenery. Then they had the stud walls removed.

"Despite having sliding patio doors at the far end the space was still dark because the stud walls created dark pockets," says Jodie. "We opened it right up and as we also wanted to let in as much light as possible we added new enormous floor to ceiling sliding glazed panels on the south and west sides." The result? "An altogether larger, lighter and brighter kitchen-diner," says Jodie,

The couple considered re-using the original cabinets but they could not make them fit with their planned layout so they sold them and started again.

They installed underfloor heating, new Kerlite shock-resistant porcelain tiled flooring and, having consulted designer Rob Evans of Kitchenkind of Cheltenham, bought a streamlined new kitchen



The rear of the house has been completely transformed and enormous floor-to-ceiling sliding glazed panels were fitted on the south and west sides of the newly-created kitchen-diner

consisting of Leicht white high gloss and walnut effect units and Silestone worktops

"We thought it better to work with a local company," says Jodie. "Kitchenkind was just round the corner from our rented flat and we walked past it all the time. So we popped in and got on really well with the designer Rob. It turned out to be the right decision because we were able to make repeat visits to tweak the design, I don't

think this would have been so easy via phone and email."

The couple hadn't heard of Leicht units before - "but the clean lines and the quality German engineering really appealed," says Jodie. "Also the walnut effect matches the walnut joinery throughout the rest of the house from the stairs to the built-in shelving in other rooms."

The massive island measuring some 3.2m by 1.4m contains the Gaggenau hob and dishwasher and an overhang at the dining room end provides a perch for visitors to sit with a drink.

"One must-have for the kitchen was the Quooker tap as with baby bottles you often need instant hot water; it also eliminates the need for a kettle and adds to the streamlined effect," says Jodie.

Were there any hitches? "Only the delays in having to wait for a second set of "secret" doors (to the larder and gym) as the first set were warped," she says. "This was because the timber was stored on site before the glazing arrived and it got damp. Everything else went quite smoothly."

Finally the walls were decorated in Sanderson's Vineyard because Jodie loves the rich dark colours often used in period homes. "We avoided them in the main house because we were trying to maximise light but we have so much light in the kitchen it was the perfect opportunity to use it. We went for a rich organic tone that worked with the greenery in the garden."

Jodie finishes, "Because we were involved in every element of the house makeover it's unique and tailored specifically to us. It's a warm, light and efficient house and most importantly it's a great family home." ■



The bathroom, shower room and downstairs WC were all refurbished with Obsidian suites from Bence of Cheltenham. Slate tiles from Kirkstone Quarry were used for both the ensuite and the family bathroom flooring

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