



# Suite talk

Interior designer *Anna Burles* talks us through this recent project, the master bedroom in a Grade II listed Islington townhouse

Words **ANNA BURLES**

Our interior design brief was to create a beautiful master bedroom and en-suite on the light-filled first floor of our client's Georgian townhouse in Islington.

We needed to preserve the beautiful original features of the Grade II listed building to the bounds of the Listed Consents secured to changes we wanted during the project. Work the boundaries of the historical restrictions lining up with highly creative solutions for adding temporary functionality to a space steeped in so much history.

The clients wanted a huge amount of storage, which we brought neatly into the fabric of the design. Our bespoke design cleverly disguised acres of hidden wardrobes. The panelling structure also became the backdrop to the feature master bed.

The cabinetry was carefully detailed to look like fixed Shaker panelling, but in fact it wasn't fitted at all in certain areas, to stay within the bounds of the Listed Consents.

The cabinetry and panelling was handle-free, with push/catch opening and in-built lighting. Dedicated cubby holes either side of the headboard for extra nightstand storage ensure that the main bedside tables could be kept tidy and uncluttered. Carefully positioned power sockets and media outlets were installed discreetly for the clients to easily charge devices at night without filling their side table.

We sourced some stunning vintage pieces for the suite. A gorgeous rosewood chest of drawers with beautiful brass handle details nestles in an alcove. Statement period fireplaces in both rooms display beautiful found objects, art pieces and elegant accessories.

As a special quirk to the project, all furniture sourced had to be customised to sit correctly on a very old and wonky wooden floor which undulates wildly across the rooms. The clients love the story it tells, so it was retained in the scheme and furniture had to be taught to sit nicely upon it.



“Working within the boundaries of the historical restrictions meant coming up with highly creative solutions for adding contemporary functionality to a space steeped in so much history”



“The shower enclosure took months of planning to fit around the Listed Building regulations”

Collection. The ‘grotesco’ antique brass taps are from a wonderful Swedish company. Not a touch of chrome in sight – and all the better for it. For the vanity, we decided the metal shower needed to be contrasted with something natural. So we repurposed a midcentury sideboard to create a free-standing washstand.

We designed a mild steel frame to house two floating mirrors above his- and-hers Carrara marble vessel sinks, working with the joinery team to ensure the antique unit could take the weight of the enormously heavy sinks. An engineering feat.

The scheme makes the very most of the double aspect first floor, with light streaming in from both sides of the house. The design is the holy grail combination of hugely practical and glamorous, integrating beautifully with the rest of the townhouse.

We worked with a whole range of wonderful artisans and specialists on the project, teams accustomed to working within the restrictions and boundaries of Listed Building Consents. The resulting scheme respects and preserves the beautiful original features of the Grade II listed townhouse without diminishing the very contemporary and fashion-forward feel of the design scheme, balancing the history of the building with the way our clients live their lives in a modern city. [annaburles.com](http://annaburles.com)

Between the two windows we placed a beautiful antique cigar cabinet, with a fun JuJu feather hat sitting above. And at the end of the bed, we added a 1950s low bench, upholstered in cool black leather, with the most amazing legs.

Our scheme included the design of a fully bespoke, steel-framed shower enclosure, housed within a beautiful light-filled part of the overall suite. The structure is wonderful in itself, but the addition of beautiful handmade ceramic tiling and lovely brass accents make it the focal part of the en-suite master bathroom.

Our custom design for the highly contemporary shower enclosure featured both clear and urban style reeded glass, which added visual interest and also offered some privacy for the couple within the bathroom. The enclosure was created in collaboration with Fabco and took months of planning to fit in and around the Listed Building restrictions.

To offset the industrial style metal enclosure, we clad the main shower wall in beautiful artisan tiles, in a bespoke pattern (one of six designs we played with). Extra softness was added with an antique brass showerhead and controls by the amazing craftspeople of Watermark

