

FAMILY MATTERS

Halcyon days spent holidaying in north Wales inspired Sarah Cross to build a special home that strengthens her ties with a bygone era

FEATURE JANET MCMEEKIN | PHOTOGRAPHY JEREMY PHILLIPS



KITCHEN

Soothing blues echo the seaside location. Island in Bone China Blue Deep intelligent eggshell, £66 for 2.5ltr, Little Greene. Montague bar stools, £265 each; Tennyson pendant lights, £100 each, both Neptune



HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY

Detached, converted and extended house, dating back in part to the 1800s

LOCATION Anglesey

ROOMS Sitting room, kitchen-diner, cloakroom, games room, six bedrooms, five bathrooms

PURCHASED 2015

PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'We also own a detached house in Cambridgeshire,' says Sarah.



DINING AREA

Bench seating ensures everyone can gather at the table.

Browning pendant lights in Salt, £485 each, Neptune. Ingolf dining chairs, £50 each, Ikea

FAVOURITE FEATURE

'The layout – the house flows extremely well. It's an easy and very practical arrangement. Even with our large family, we never feel on top of each other'

HALLWAY

A jaunty anchor sets a nautical tone.

Cushions in Seagulls, £64m, Peony & Sage.

Try the large Rye grey baskets, £49 each, The Holding Company



Had it not been for an incredibly stormy night back in 1882, it's highly unlikely Sarah Cross would ever have built a stunning New England-style home in a magical, coastal spot in north Wales. 'At the time, my great-great grandmother had travelled from London to Holyhead, with the intention of sailing to Dublin to visit her parents in Ireland,' explains Sarah. 'However, when rough seas meant the crossing was cancelled, she ended up staying in nearby Trearddur Bay on Anglesey.'

Having spotted Rhoscolyn across the headland, Sarah's ancestor was enchanted by the breathtaking view, and made a point of visiting there the following year. After instantly falling in love with Rhoscolyn, her tales of this carefree coastal village, with its golden sandy beaches and secluded coves, piqued the interest of Sarah's relatives. Soon, her great-great aunts and uncles also began holidaying, and then building properties there.

'As a child, I spent every summer here, staying with my extended family, including cousins and siblings, in the house my grandparents bought,' says Sarah. 'I've such fond memories of fun times, playing in rock pools, lobster-potting and excitedly exploring with my brother, sister and cousins – just as previous generations of our family had done. As a result, all the cousins have an extremely close relationship, which is something we cherish.'

When Sarah met and married David, the pair, who live in Cambridge, continued the long-standing tradition of holidaying here. 'As our own children came along, we wanted to find a house in Rhoscolyn,' explains Sarah, an interior designer who runs Little Fish At Home and Little Fish Escapes. 'I yearned to create a

LESSON LEARNT

'Overseeing a project remotely is tricky. I'd often have to work late into the night, emailing the builders and suppliers'



SITTING ROOM

Panoramic views deliver a relaxed mood here.

Ashbourne grey painted coffee table, £249.99, Chiltern Oak Furniture. Curtains in Catherine Rose Blue fabric, £75m, Cabbages & Roses. Floor cushions in Seahorses in Amalfi Blue, £54m, Peony & Sage



The couple's children enjoy exploring rock pools on the local beach.



HALLWAY

The wooden seagull was a gift from Sarah's uncle and was one of 50 that were made for a cousin's wedding



Beach hut style cupboards mean nets, buckets and spades are easily accessible

MASTER BEDROOM

This simple bed is a modern take on the classic four-poster. Try the Celeste bed, £493.70, Maisons du Monde. Curtains in Cow Parsley, £52m, Vanessa Arbuthnott



LAST WORD

'The views here are just jaw-droppingly beautiful. It's such a gorgeous and tranquil place to unwind and spend quality time with our family'



GAMES ROOM

The children play here on rainy days. Walls in Salt matt emulsion, £38 for 2.5ltr, Neptune. Red/Blue striped rug, £70, The White Company

**BEDROOM**

Marine-themed bunk beds add a playful touch. Roman blind in Vintage All Stars in Stone Blue, £64m, Peony & Sage



beautiful oasis where our family and guests could enjoy a relaxed home-from-home.'

The couple spent six years searching before they found a property perfect for renovating. Located less than 10 minutes' walk from the beach, Llain Y Brenin boasts spectacular views over the fields towards Snowdonia. Having snapped up the house, the family, including Oliver, 14, Jonny, 12, Eloise, 10, Harry, nine, and six-year-old Lottie, spent that summer living there. 'Familiarising ourselves with the light and orientation of the property helped me formulate the design,' says Sarah. 'I knew that the main living spaces had to be on the first floor to maximise the vistas, and felt that a large glazed balcony would also work well for the indoor/outdoor living we hankered after.'

After liaising with an architect and gaining planning permission, in January 2016, building work began. 'I've always admired New England homes and believed this style would look great, as well as being a nod to the coastal location,' says Sarah. 'I felt the subdued grey exterior would sit well in the landscape and complement the muted tones of the fabrics I had chosen.'

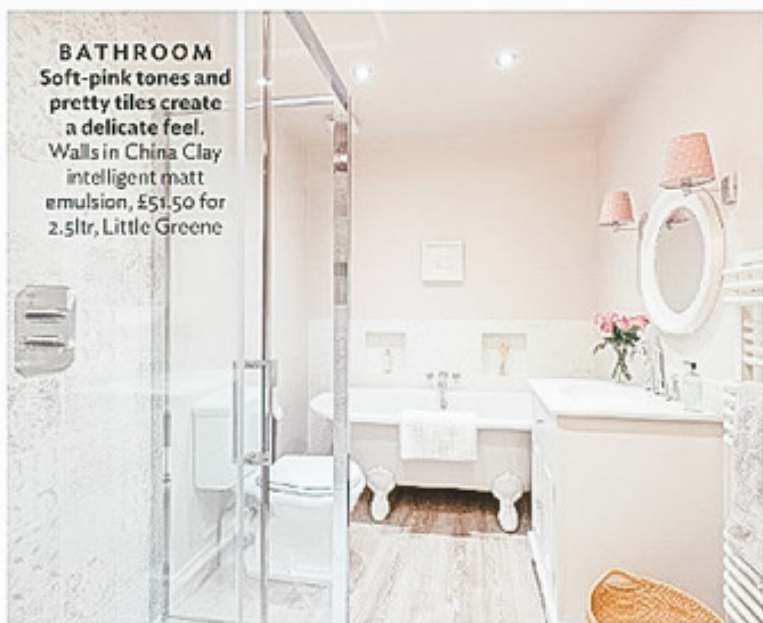
Taking on the mantle of project manager, Sarah worked tirelessly for months to bring the couple's vision to fruition. Because of the distance, she could only visit Llain Y Brenin about once a month but could rely on her trusty builders to steer her through any snags.

Burning the midnight oil has certainly reaped rewards and this stunning home is everything the family could have hoped for – and more. 'When we arrive here, it's amazing how quickly we all slow down,' says Sarah. 'We all go back to basics and savour the simple pleasures – just as my great-great grandmother would have done, many moons ago.' 🏡

BATHROOM

Soft-pink tones and pretty tiles create a delicate feel.

Walls in China Clay intelligent matt emulsion, £51.50 for 2.5ltr, Little Greene



BATHROOM, A freestanding tub brings spa-style luxury to this space.

Worcester bath in Quarrycast White, £3,683.85, Victoria & Albert Baths

